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A MEMOIR

OF

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF THE LATE

WILLIAM TAYLOR

OF NORWICH,

AUTHOR OF "ENGLISH SYNONYMS DISCRIMINATED;" "AN HISTORIC SURVEY OF GERMAN POETRY," ETC. ETC.

CONTAINING HIS

CORRESPONDENCE OF MANY YEARS WITH THE LATE

ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.,

AND ORIGINAL LETTERS FROM SIR WALTER SCOTT,

AND OTHER EMINENT LITERARY MEN.

COMPILED AND EDITED

BY J. W. ROBBERDS, F.G.S.,

OF NORWICH.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PREFACE.

This Memoir was originally undertaken with the design of prefixing it to a new edition of Mr. Taylor's "English Synonyms Discriminated;" but the materials were found too extensive and important to be compressed within such limits. Unseen and almost unknown, he exercised an influence over the public mind of this country, the effects of which are still progressively developing. It was by him that the vast stores of German literature were first laid open before us, and he first infused into our periodical criticism that new spirit which has rendered it the guide of intellect and the ruler of opinion. To show the working of these impulses, to do justice to his philological studies, and to display the varied erudition and bright

conceptions with which for many years he regularly enriched and enlivened our monthly publications,—these alone would have carried the duty of his biographer far beyond the scope of the original plan; but when I discovered the nature and extent of his correspondence with the late Robert Southey, I felt that the history of two such minds, narrated by themselves, without gloss or varnish, in their freshest, best and most vigorous season, must be much too interesting and instructive to be withheld from the world. Mr. Southey's ready assent to the publication of these letters, his kindness in furnishing me with that portion of them which was in his possession, and the interest with which it will be seen that he regarded the subject, created additional claims upon my attention and perseverance; and I must ever regret, both that the decline of his health deprived me of the valuable assistance which he had offered, and that he was taken from us before he could see this

memorial of one whose worth and talents he so highly and justly appreciated.

Had the task of arranging and digesting these materials been at first set before me in its entire magnitude, I should have shrunk from the undertaking. Although I had for the space of thirty-five years enjoyed the intimacy and the friendship of William Taylor, the idea that I might one day be his biographer had never entered my mind. Had it occurred to me, I should have availed myself of the frequent opportunities afforded me, to have recorded brilliant sallies of conversational talent, and unpremeditated effusions of genius, such as have rarely shed their lustre over pages like these. Nor could I command the leisure to explore all the sources whence the deficiency might be supplied. Literary pursuits are not my occupation; they are to me only the evening relaxation of days engrossed by the toils and anxieties of busy commercial life. It is needless to enlarge on such disad-

vantages, or on the delays and imperfections which have arisen from them. Still I am willing to hope that these will be leniently judged when I state, that almost every line of this work has been written, revised and corrected for the press, in those hours which all but the reveller and the student give up to repose. Having engaged in it, I have persevered to its completion; not expecting for myself emolument or celebrity, but anxious only to perform an act of justice to the memory of William Taylor, by letting the world know who and what he was. For this purpose alone I have endeavoured to display the excellent qualities of his head and heart, and to plant the standard of his fame before those by whom he was mistaken, or to whom he was misrepresented. If I have attained this object, it is the only reward that I seek for my labours.

J. W. R.

Norwich, August 8th, 1843.

CONTENTS.

VOL. I.

CHAPTER I.

1765 to 1782.

Page

Mr. Taylor's birth and education 1

CHAPTER II.

1782 to 1791.

Account of Mr. Taylor from the time of his return from Germany to that of his retiring from business 37

CHAPTER III.

1791 to 1796.

Mr. Taylor's first literary productions 87

CHAPTER IV.

1793 to 1799.

Mr. Taylor's first engagement with the Monthly Review and Monthly Magazine 120

CHAPTER V.

1798 to 1799.

Page
Mr. Taylor's early correspondence with Robert Southey 207

CHAPTER VI.

1800 to 1801.

Correspondence with Robert Southey continued 315

CHAPTER VII.

1802 to 1803.

Mr. Taylor's visit to Paris.—Editorship of the 'Iris.'—
Correspondence continued 396

MEMOIR

OF THE LATE

WILLIAM TAYLOR, OF NORWICH.

CHAPTER I.

1765 to 1782.

MR. TAYLOR'S BIRTH AND EDUCATION.

A LIFE of lettered ease, spent in provincial retirement (for such was that of William Taylor), can offer little to interest the general reader; still there are not a few who entertain a natural and laudable desire to learn all that can be known respecting those who have left enduring records of their names. To them it is not only pleasant to live over with the eminent and the learned the whole course of their early training and maturer studies, but it is also useful to observe how talents that have enlightened a world were developed and grew up. They find instruction in exploring the secret fountains of thoughts which have awakened the thinking

faculties of others, and tracing the formation of opinions which have become to us beacons of everlasting truth. Such materials for biography are not the product of any exclusive locality. They may be found in the village school-room as well as at Westminster, Harrow, or Eton. They may be obtained as readily beneath the roof of the private tutor, as in the lecture-rooms of Edinburgh, the halls of Oxford, or the Senate-house of Cambridge. They may be collected as abundantly in the quiet seclusion of a country residence, as on the public and busy theatre of the metropolis. So also as regards the eminently gifted, but uncelebrated author of 'English Synonyms discriminated,' his quiet and unostentatious course, seldom stretching beyond the social circles of his native city, may guide the reflecting student of the human mind to as rich a vein of observation as can be met with in the brilliant career of others, to whom fashion or intrigue, good fortune or merit itself, may have given a more excursive and popular notoriety. Such at least is the deep and universal impression which he has left on the minds of those who knew him; and it is in compliance with their wishes, founded upon this conviction, that the writer of the present memoir has undertaken his gratifying and honourable task—too readily perhaps forgetting his own incompetency in his

zeal to do justice to the memory and character of his friend. Assisted, however, and encouraged by the reminiscences, counsels and documents kindly furnished by Thomas Dyson, Esq., of Diss, Mr. Taylor's cousin and executor, and by Edward Barron, Esq., of London, who were the most constant in their attachment to him, the most frequent participators of his society and converse, and the most judicious admirers of his talents, it may be hoped that the following narrative will present to the public a faithful portraiture of a most original and comprehensive mind. More complete it might undoubtedly have been rendered, had a larger portion of William Taylor's own letters been recoverable. To the few among his friends who have forwarded such contributions his biographer is eminently indebted; but most especially to Robert Southey, Esq., whose high regard for the subject of this memoir had led to a careful preservation of all his letters. These have been communicated without reserve; and their correspondence, which commenced in 1798 and continued through many succeeding years, will be found to afford much interesting and valuable information connected with the literary history of that period*.

* The esteem entertained by both parties for each other is strongly expressed in their letters. But it is pleasant to know that these feelings remained unchanged to the last,

The short interchange of letters between Mr. Taylor and Sir Walter Scott, relative to the early translation of Bürger's 'Lenore,' will also supply deficiencies and correct errors in what has already been laid before the public on that subject; and the details here collected relative to his numerous contributions to the periodicals of the last half century, disclose the sources of copious streams of information and learning, anonymously sent forth, which would have conferred

amidst the fluctuations of opinion, the vicissitudes of time, and the drawbacks of long and remote separation. When Mr. Dyson communicated to Mr. Southey the intelligence of William Taylor's death, he received an answer, in which the following passage speaks forcibly this language: "I was not aware of my old friend's illness, or I should certainly have written to him, to express that unabated regard which I have felt for him eight and thirty years, and that hope which I shall ever feel, that we may meet in a higher and happier state of existence. I have known very few who equalled him in talents—none who had a kinder heart; and there never lived a more dutiful son, or a sincerer friend." And when the writer of this memoir made his request, that William Taylor's letters might be confided to his care, the subjoined reply repeats in another form corresponding sentiments: "Every letter that I received from our friend William Taylor has been carefully preserved, and the whole of them shall be put into your hands. Early in the summer I have promised to visit Neville White at Tivetshall in your county. I will take the letters with me. Perhaps we could arrange a meeting, when I could look at my own part of the correspondence and converse with you upon your undertaking. Few persons can take deeper interest in it than myself."

additional celebrity even upon the best known and most popular names.

The father of William Taylor was a respectable manufacturer at Norwich, bearing the same name as he gave to his son, and nearly connected with the opulent family of Crowe, to whose business he succeeded on their retiring with an ample fortune. He married Sarah, the second daughter of Mr. John Wright of Diss in the county of Norfolk, and niece of Dr. Kervin Wright, an eminent physician in Norwich. Their son was born in that city on the 7th of November, 1765*. He was brought up with all the tenderness and care usually bestowed upon an only child; and being destined to become a partner in his father's business, which was principally an export trade, particular attention was paid to his acquiring a perfect knowledge of the languages most used in communicating with the foreign correspondents of the house. At a very early age he was placed under the Rev. John Bruckner, pastor of the French and Dutch Pro-

* He once said jocosely, "If I ever write my own life, I shall commence it in the following grandiloquent manner. Like Plato, like Sir Isaac Newton, like Frederic Leopold Count Stolberg, I was born on the 7th of November; and like Mrs. Opie and Sir James Edward Smith, I was baptized by the Rev. Samuel Bourn, then the Presbyterian minister of the Octagon Chapel at Norwich."—*MS. Reminiscences of Edward Barron, Esq.*

testant churches in Norwich, and author of the 'Théorie du Système Animal,' printed at Leyden in 1768, as also of some 'Observations on the Diversions of Purley,' published in English in the year 1790, under the assumed name of Cassander. Mr. Bruckner was a man of vigorous intellectual powers, discriminative habits, and quick observation. He grounded his pupil, not only in the elements of the French tongue, but also in the general principles of language; and by the early study of these he traced undoubtedly the first outlines of the mind that was afterwards to produce the best work on English Synonyms which we possess. At the same time William Taylor received lessons in music and dancing. For the former he had neither ear nor taste, and it was soon neglected; the latter was made subservient to the acquisition of that studied politeness which was then considered to be inseparable from a good education, and which tinged his manners till the latest period of his life. His early companions long remembered and spoke of the formal bow and ceremonious gravity with which he was accustomed to salute his teachers on entering or leaving their presence, thus when only seven or eight years old exhibiting to his astonished school-fellows the drawing-room courtesies of a punctilious and artificial age. This course of instruction was con-

tinued till he had nearly completed his ninth year: the only records of his progress up to that time are found in the subsequent results to which it conducted. In 1774 Mr. Bruckner's superintendence of his studies terminated. But the mutual regard which the preceptor and the pupil had conceived for each other was evinced in the friendly intercourse which they kept up till the decease of the former; and after that melancholy event, the pen of the survivor paid to his name a just and eloquent tribute, which was inserted in the Monthly Magazine for August 1804*.

On leaving Mr. Bruckner, William Taylor was entered as a boarder in an academy then recently established by the Rev. Rochemont Barbauld, minister of the Presbyterian congregation at Palgrave, near Diss. Here the dead languages became the objects of his study, not indeed with that nice attention to quantities and accents which constitutes so prominent a feature in the routine grammar-school exercises of the present day; but he acquired the knowledge of as much Greek and Latin as he appears ever to have found needful or available in the extensive and varied literary course which he afterwards pursued.

His attainments were not, however, exclusively

* Vol. xviii. p. 84.

made in the classical department of education. The world of science was opened wide before him; and in his survey of it he was taught to dwell the longest on those objects which were most congenial to his ulterior views. Among these geography and history took the lead; he received also lessons in English composition from the talented and tasteful consort of his preceptor, whom in after years he designated as "the Mother of his mind," and always regarded her instructions as the most valuable part of the discipline through which he then passed*. His application was assiduous and effective; and the hours which his companions gave up to amusement were generally devoted by him to persevering study in the retirement of his private room. It is interesting to observe the progressive development of his ideas and his first efforts of independent thought in the letters and themes which he sent to his parents during this period, and which they preserved with admiring fondness. Some of those written by them in return are also still in existence; the mother's breathing all that the tenderest affection and most gratified pride could inspire towards a darling and dutiful child; while the father, more cautious and guarded, tempered his commendations with prudential admonition; yet the following

* See the Life of Sayers, p. xii.

superscription in his own hand-writing on the carefully folded packet, " My son's letters from school, not to be destroyed," indicated the inward and secret feelings of the delighted parent. There are also letters from Mrs. Barbauld, expressing with her usual elegant felicity the high satisfaction which she and her husband felt in contemplating the promise of future excellence held out in the industry and docility of their clever pupil.

Amongst William Taylor's companions at Palgrave, was Frank, afterwards Dr. Sayers, whose poetical works and prose Disquisitions have given him so honourable and permanent a rank in the list of English writers. It was here that the long and uninterrupted attachment which subsisted between them had its origin. In most schools the two cleverest boys are alienated from each other by reciprocal jealousies, and become leaders of rival factions. The opposite feelings mutually evinced by these equally-gifted youths afford an agreeable indication of that kind-heartedness which was the prevailing trait in the character of both, and which preserved their friendship unbroken during the term of forty-three years, amidst severer trials than the struggles of academic vanity or the freaks of juvenile ambition. Of this friendship, William Taylor, in his ' Life of Dr. Sayers,' has

drawn so exquisite a picture, that the pencil which might attempt to add an incident or heighten a tint would only mar the beauty of the work.

In 1779 he quitted Palgrave, and in the month of August, before he had completed his fourteenth year, he paid his first visit to the Continent. On this excursion he was attended by Mr. Casenave, who at that time conducted the foreign correspondence for his father, and subsequently became a partner in the house. In the company of this gentleman he travelled through the Netherlands, France and Italy, sojourning entire weeks and even months in some places, as at Bayonne, Vicq, Marseilles, Turin, Milan and Rome, in part with a view to perfect himself in the languages of the countries, and in part to be initiated in those commercial mysteries which were intended to be the occupation of his life. His attention to both these points, and his general observations on the scenes through which he passed, are recorded in the correspondence which he regularly kept up during that period with his father and mother. To the former he wrote at first in French, and afterwards in Italian; and these letters evince not only his wonderful proficiency in these studies, but an accuracy of composition, which shows that even at that early age he did not translate

his ideas from English into other tongues, but that he had acquired the facility of thinking at will in whatever language he was in the act of using. This process inures the mind to activity and watchfulness; it forms it to weigh and discriminate the specific value of different terms; it teaches it on all occasions to select the most appropriate; and thus, while it is eminently favourable to copiousness and elegance of diction, it is no less conducive to the highest attainable clearness and precision of expression. Here all that the Cambridge scholar professes to seek through long years of dry and intense application to mathematics is accomplished in less time, with greater ease and to more enduring advantage; for while the mechanism of mental operation is constructing, the materials which are to be wrought by it are also provided; the boundless stores of the whole world of letters are laid open to the artificer; he becomes master of all that talent has discovered or experience collected in every age and clime; and even what the flood of time has overwhelmed and buried in its successive deposits is brought within the scope of his researches. Philology is to the history of the human mind what geology is to that of the earth. Words are its fossils; and if properly scrutinized and classed they will designate and characterize in continuous order the strata of

civilization, mark the progressive development of the ideas of man, and finally lay open before us the pristine elementary form of language itself.

It cannot be supposed that any such views as these presented themselves to young Taylor in that stage of his progress which is now under our consideration. The objects of which he then contemplated the attainment were far less exalted. But having professed to show how his mind received that peculiar bent for which it was afterwards distinguished, it is necessary that I should point out at every step the direction in which his studies tended; and, looking at the rich spoil which they gathered, I am disposed to claim for the course of education in which he was thus trained an efficacy certainly more expansive, and probably, if tried upon a larger scale, more applicable to useful purposes, than any which has ever yet been ascribed to our established canons of academic discipline.

The letters of a youth of fourteen, however interesting at the time to his friends, are not calculated for publication. Still a few brief extracts from some of those written by Mr. Taylor may be acceptable as specimens of their style and matter, and will also serve to substantiate some of the foregoing remarks. It does not appear that the whole plan of his journey was arranged

previously to his leaving England; for during his stay at Vicq he was first made acquainted with his father's intention that he should proceed to Italy, on which subject he thus expresses himself in a letter written from that place on the 16th of October, 1779 :—

" Nous allons partir pour Toulouse, mon compagnon de voyage ayant terminé ses affaires à Bayonne. Votre bonté m'a aussi réservé un voyage duquel je me promets beaucoup de plaisir ; c'est-à-dire, le voyage d'Italie, de ce pays célèbre, autrefois le siège de l'empire universel, mais à present tombé presque dans l'anéantissement par la superstition qui y domine."

The first idea of his subsequent visit to Germany, which influenced so largely his character and pursuits, seems also to have been suggested at this time, for in the same letter he adds—

" M. Casenave me dit que nous devons aussi passer dans l'Allemagne ; mais je crains que les quatre mois que vous voulez bien m'accorder pour apprendre la langue de ce pays là n'y suffiront pas. Avez-vous fait part à ma mère de ce projet ? Dites-lui que je m'en promets un grand agrément, et presentez-lui les assurances de mon affection."

His descriptions of Southern France and Italy manifest an intentness of observation often penetrating further below the surface of things

than could have been expected from so youthful a traveller. Those countries had not then been explored and rifled by the host of tourists, whose letters, diaries, and recollections have since that time scarcely left a blade of grass unnoticed in all their extensive provinces. His views and reflections therefore were unborrowed and original, and they heightened by the charm of novelty the pleasure which they imparted to his naturally partial correspondents. Those who during his after-life have witnessed his speculative habits and admired the brilliant sallies of his imagination, would perhaps be surprised at the sober and subdued tone of these early compositions, and the plain matter-of-fact statements in which they abound, more redolent of the compting-room than of the library. But in him enthusiasm was as yet unawakened and fancy unborn. His destination seems to have been always carefully kept in mind and sedulously prepared for. Yet the secret bias of his inclination to retirement and study would sometimes betray itself, as in one of his letters from Marseilles, where, after giving an account of his visit to a Carthusian monastery, and describing the facilities which it offered for literary occupation, he concludes by saying, "Si jamais je deviens moine, je me ferai Chartreux."

Still it was impossible for a mind like his,

possessing the capacities which it afterwards displayed, to pass unmoved and unstimulated through the scenes which he there traversed. While the interesting relics of Roman magnificence at every step placed the events of the past before him in forms more vividly distinct, the wonders of modern art made him more sensible of the powers of man, more proud of his own kindred alliance with that high order of intellect, whose progress not even the fall of empires can arrest, and whose works survive all the vicissitudes of ambition and all the chances of fate. Young minds are generally susceptible to the beauties of nature, nor was he indifferent to those which he everywhere beheld around him; but the impressions which they produced upon him seemed to be always most lively when they were most improved by human labour and ingenuity, and rendered conducive to the widest diffusion and keenest enjoyment of practical good. The first faint gleams of the excitement produced by this train of sensations may be discerned in his descriptions of some of the more striking scenes which he visited, as in the following account of his first approach to Venice, extracted from his letter of the 22nd July, 1780.

"As the river Brenta offers the convenience of a passage by water, we preferred hiring a bark from Padua quite to Venice, to travelling by

land to the sea-shore and there embarking for that famous city. The beauty of the banks of this river made us greatly rejoice at our determination; the number of palaces, country-seats, gardens and villages which every meander presented to our view gave us much pleasure. But this only served to prepare us for a much greater in the singular and astonishing view of Venice itself. At the mouth of the Brenta this striking prospect first presented itself. Behind us we had a well-cultivated plain, interspersed with trees and vines, terminated on the left by the Alps, on the right by the Apennines; on each side a vast extent of sea, and before us the steeples, houses and towers of Venice, rising from the waves in which their foundations are placed. Around this group of islands are many others, where the nobles have palaces and gardens, and which being planted with trees form an agreeable contrast with the city itself. Never did so surprising a prospect present itself before to my eyes. It is impossible to describe the effect it produced upon us. We remained almost immoveable on the deck till we approached the city, which is about five miles from the shore."

The exquisite picture which the powerful muse of Byron has since exhibited of this same scene, decked in all the gorgeous tints of an

Italian sunset, may well throw into the shade the sketches even of more experienced artists than our youthful novice. But the feelings, which the latter had not then a sufficient command of language to delineate, may claim some kindred even with the inspirations of the mighty bard; the influence which they exercised was permanent and beneficial, and performed too important a part in his mental training to be omitted in the details of its progress. Even the lapse of fifty years had not effaced the impressions of those moments; for in the course of a discussion which took place about the year 1830, respecting the manner in which one of his friends had applied Lord Byron's

> " . . . . . vast Iris of the West,
> Where the day joins the past eternity,"

and which William Taylor censured as bordering too closely on mysticism, when he was reminded that the passage formed part of Childe Harold's description of an evening on the banks of the Brenta, the recollection of the sentiments that had been awakened in himself on the same spot induced him at once to admit that the quotation had not been inappositely introduced.

In his next letter of the 1st August, he thus refers again to the same subject, addressing his father in the language of the country wherein he was writing:

"Nell' ultima ho parlato della veduta singulare che si gode avanti di entrare in Venezia. Parliamo ora dell' interiore della città. Vedete quel gruppo di case poste nell' acqua sopra fondamenti di marmo. Osservate gli scalini di quel palazzo lavati dall' onda. Guardate quella folla di gondole, che servono quì in luogo di carrozze; con qual prestezza nuotano i loro corpi lunghi; pare che vadano a toccarsi ed a distruggersi in ogni momento; ma la destrezza maravigliosa dei barcaroli le conduce colla più grande esattezza."

One extract more, describing his arrival at Naples, will conclude this summary of the materials collected during so early a tour in foreign countries, towards forming the mould in which his future habits of thinking were cast.

"*August* 16.—Yesterday we discovered the island of Ischia, remarkable for its mineral waters. Today we passed it as well as Capri, another island at the mouth of the gulf of Naples, in which the Roman emperor Tiberius died. We then entered the bay, the bottom of which is occupied by Naples. What an astonishing, what a delightful prospect! The Belvedere of Chanteloupe in France, the Superga at Turin, the light-house at Genoa, the ramparts of Bergamo, and the mouth of the Brenta, have none of them furnished a view equal to this. But you will ask: And the

banks of the Lago Maggiore, with which you were so much charmed, are they effaced from your remembrance by the bay of Naples? No; they were beauties of a very different kind. Here no unruffled water presents a second image of vineyards, meadows and villages agreeably interspersed. But there no Vesuvius proudly lifts a double-smoking summit above the clouds; there no amphitheatre of hills planted with olives presents at its base a city five miles in length; there no string of magnificent palaces encircles the waters; there no ruined Baiæ recalls to the mind that these situations were once the delight of Horace, of Lucretius, and many other famous Romans."

In the early part of January 1781, he returned to England by way of Geneva and Paris. His New-year's congratulatory epistle to his mother, a custom which he never omitted when absent from her, is dated from the latter of these cities, and concludes this portion of his correspondence. But his father's impatient eagerness to make him a thorough man of business did not allow him to remain long inactive at home. On the 2nd of April he again left Norwich in company with Mr. Schwartz, a foreign merchant, who was about to visit the manufacturing districts and most of the principal commercial towns of our own country. This was the only part of their plan which was

communicated to Mrs. Taylor at the time of her son's departure. It was concealed from her that his companion was to escort him as far as Brussels on his way to Germany, in execution of the project already contemplated during his journey in France. After a tour of six weeks to Sheffield, Leeds, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Bristol, Exeter and London, they embarked on the 17th of May at Margate, and reached Ostend the following day. William Taylor remained a few weeks at Brussels, and about the middle of July arrived at Detmold, the capital of the county of Lippe in Westphalia, where it had been arranged that he should pursue his study of the German language under the care of Mr. Rœderer, a native of Alsace, who was minister of the Protestant church in that town. The professional instructions of his preceptor were materially aided by the friendly intercourse which he assiduously cultivated with several intelligent persons residing in the place, particularly with Mr. Clostermeyer, who was private tutor to the sons of the chancellor of the county, and Mr. Benzler, who afterwards accepted the appointment of librarian to Count Stolberg at Wernigerode. These, as well as Mr. Rœderer himself, had a strong taste for literature, and were personally acquainted with Gœthe, Schlœtzer, Lavater, and other writers, who were then beginning to distinguish themselves in Ger-

many, and whose names have since acquired a celebrity coextensive with civilization itself. The best English authors, especially our poets*, were well known and warmly admired in this little circle. The members of it were proud not only that their language was a cognate dialect to that of this country, but also that the then rising genius of their literature was claiming kindred with ours, disdaining the trammels of the cold artificial school, proclaiming an ardent Shaksperian allegiance to nature alone, and entering courageously upon that amicable rivalry, so beautifully described by Klopstock in his ode on the Muses of Britain and Germany. Such were the guides by whom William Taylor's new studies were directed, and by whose assistance he soon became thoroughly versed in their language, and master of all the best amongst the original and racy productions of its active press. Having been so long accustomed to the smooth fluency of French and the musical softness of Italian, the rough harsh-sounding tones of German grated at first unpleasantly on his ear. In one of his

* Mr. Benzler published in 1785 a work which he entitled 'The Poetical Library, being a Collection of the best modern English Poets,' to gratify, as he stated in his prospectus, the love of English literature, then daily increasing among his countrymen.

first letters from Detmold, giving an account of the manner in which his time was employed, he says with more of sarcasm than he was wont to indulge, that a portion of each morning was occupied "in widening his throat to afford an easy passage to the German gutturals." But as soon as the character of the language began to disclose itself to him, it became an agreeable and interesting study. He was struck with the copiousness of its resources, with its flexible adaptation to every sensible or abstract idea, with its unborrowed dignity and self-derived force of expression. Its close affinity to the ascendant portion of his mother tongue made him for the first time observant of the distinction between the Gothic and the Latin forms of speech, and taught him the practical application of those principles of which Mr. Bruckner had imparted to him his earliest glimpse. The permanent influence which these pursuits exercised in forming his opinions and adorning his mind, and the more extensive results to which they afterwards so largely contributed by first calling the attention of his countrymen to the splendid talents then at work in Germany, give importance even to the most seemingly trifling records of his progress. The following letter, written as usual to his father in Italian, will be read therefore with interest, as exhibiting the

commencement of these impressions, and the germ of sentiments afterwards fully developed in the introduction to his English 'Synonyms.'

"Detmold, 26 Dicembre 1781.

"Quanto più io studio, carissimo padre, la lingua tedesca, tanto me ne diviene lo studio più aggradevole ed interessante. Fra tutte le lingue che conosco, mi pare questa la più suscettibile di una gran forza d'espressione; e benchè per l'armonia e la dolcezza ceda, come ognun'altra, all'italiana, credo ancora che sia più ricca di essa. È senza dubbio più valente che qualunque altra in proprie ricchezze, e ha derivato meno parole da altre lingue. Nel compararla all'inglese io bilancio sempre sopra la preferenza. Avendo la tedesca più metro, e potendo piegarsi a tutte le misure usate dai poeti Greci e Romani, pare più adattata alla poesia; ma, lo confesso, io preferisco la nostra prosa alla tedesca, per ragione della sua più grande semplicità di construzione e naturalezza nell'ordine delle parole. Dalla lingua passiamo agli autori. Secondo tutto ciò che nelle conversazioni ho inteso, abbondano i buoni autori moderni. Di questi la più grande parte o vivono ora, o sono morti da quattro o cinque anni in qua. Pare che il presente sia il bel secolo della Germania; ma gli scrittori sono ancora troppo moderni per essere conosciuti ne' paesi forestieri. Klopstock, poeta epico e per conse-

guenza il più famoso di tutti, è dai Tedeschi molto al nostro Milton anteposto. Collyer ha di questo autore tradotto in inglese il poema intitolato 'Il Messia.' Ma motti qui si lagnano orribilmente di questa traduzione, poichè, come si dice, non spiega le sublimi bellezze dell' originale. Si lagnano qui di questa traduzione, io dico, perchè molte persone che conosco quì intendono l' inglese. Io leggo adesso questo poema col Signor Rœderer nell' originale. Un altro famoso scrittore col nome Lavater, ha scritto sovra la fisionomia, e pretende di potere leggere il carattere degli uomini nei loro volti. Questo Lavater è divenuto celeberrimo ; si parla più di lui che di qualunque altro autore, per ragione della novità del suo soggetto e della sua maniera di trattarlo."

We here see, that in five months from the commencement of his application to German he was able to comprehend the spirit of the language and to read Klopstock's 'Messiah' ; and although he has here mentioned no other author than this poet and Lavater, still we know, from his own statement in the 'Life of Dr. Sayers' (p. xix), that during the remaining seven months of his residence in Germany he had "pervasively studied" its general literature. In the same time also he achieved the faculty of writing the language with such correctness and elegance, that Mr. Rœderer, in reply to the first letter received from him after

his departure from Detmold, compliments him with the title of the German Pliny*. No study in which he had hitherto been engaged appears to have been so wholly captivating to him. He pursued it with an eagerness which was the result of excited curiosity and an evidence of gratified inclination. While the language itself interested him warmly by its originality of structure and expressiveness of diction, the varied compositions which it laid open before him were peculiarly adapted to win their way to his heart and to his understanding. He had just attained to that period of life, when the fire of genius is kindled by the enthusiasm of youth. His watchfulness of observation and desire of knowledge were quickened by the new scenes and manners which he beheld in a country then rarely visited by En-

* The whole passage in the worthy pastor's letter is so characteristic that it is worth transcribing. "*Ihren Brief las ich mit eben so viel Vergnügen als Bewunderung. Wenn Sie so fortmachen, werden Sie noch ein teutscher Plinius. Es reut mich dieses Wort geschrieben zu haben. Sie werden glauben, dass ich ein Compliment machen will, und so sehr Sie recht viele Complimente verdienen, so weit mehr verdienen Sie dass man Ihnen die Wahrheit sage; und in so fern sage ich nochmals, Sie werden noch ein teutscher Plinius.*" ("I have read your letter with equal pleasure and admiration. If you go on thus, you will be a German Pliny. I repent having written this word, for you will regard it as a mere compliment; and although you deserve many compliments, yet you deserve still more to be addressed in the language of truth. With this view then I repeat it, you will be a German Pliny.")

glishmen, and little known to them even in books. Far separation from home and kindred had softened his nature. The transient acquaintances which he had formed in the course of his wanderings had been successively broken off before familiarity had unveiled the incongruities of temper and opinion, by which distaste and coolness are commonly engendered. There remained therefore of them only such agreeable and lively recollections as served to strengthen his ordinary love of society and create an earnest longing for the settled enjoyment of its more durable affections and closer ties. In this frame of mind he was brought for the first time into contact with a literature congenial to his own excited state of feeling, luxuriating like himself in all the vigour and freshness of youth, and not unfrequently indulging in its wildest extravagance of fancy and most exuberant tenderness of romance. A new and powerful impulse had been given to the public mind of Germany. It had been aroused from its lethargic torpor by the splendour of genius bursting upon it from the works of a host of writers, such as have seldom been found to flourish in contemporary glory. Frederic of Prussia, notwithstanding the pedantic contempt which he affected for his mother-tongue, and the ostentatious preference which he displayed for the language of France, still by his own writings

and by the familiarity of friendly intimacy to which he admitted Voltaire, familiarized his subjects and their neighbours with the new conviction, that authorship and learning did not lower the dignity even of the highest order in the state. But while he thus rendered study honourable, he nettled at the same time the national pride, and awakened a general desire to prove that the stigma which he had cast upon the country of his birth was undeserved and unjust. Men of sterling talent, who felt this, exerted themselves to remove the opprobrium, and their efforts were hailed throughout Germany with an eager and rapturous welcome. The eminence to which Bodmer attained in the Senate of Zürich, and the honours which Wieland and Gœthe received in the Court of Weimar, founded a nobility of talent, which eclipsed and humbled the empty pride of ancestry, so long and so ridiculously cherished in that country. The cultivation of letters became an object of ambition even to the most exalted rank, and gave an added lustre even to princely titles. A national literature was then formed, which became rapidly and extensively popular. The educated classes (and one of the first effects of this new order of things was to diffuse education more widely) welcomed with enthusiasm and discussed with understanding the works that came before them. As the love

of reading was thus spread abroad, authors multiplied. Booksellers and publishers eagerly encouraged and liberally ministered to this craving for mental aliment. Each succeeding Leipsic fair distributed thousands of new volumes, of as many different shades of merit. But no language perhaps can boast of having ushered into the world within the same space of time so many works of standard and enduring reputation, as Germany produced during the latter half of the eighteenth century.

This general excitement could not fail to produce a corresponding effect upon the mind of William Taylor, especially in its then excitable state. He was carried away by the enthusiasm which pervaded all around him. The compositions and the opinions which he heard daily commended, he was prepared to admire and to espouse even before he could understand them. But as soon as he possessed the key to this new storehouse of knowledge, he explored its treasures with unwearied diligence. His most fondly cherished sentiments found there an accordant echo. His natural benevolence was dilated by the generous and expansive liberality which every page inspired. The dreams of his awakened fancy were fed by the bold and brilliant imagery of its poets. The free and fearless inquiries of its philosophers induced in him the habit of equally

unfettered speculation; and all his better aspirations were allured still higher by the bright and glorious views that were opened before him. Thus acceptable and spirit-stirring were the novel ideas which he derived from these imaginative, vigorous and animated writers. He brooded with delight over the images which they created; he followed with alacrity in the train of thought into which he was led by them, and became their willing, devoted and ardent disciple.

After a residence of twelve months, William Taylor quitted Detmold on the 21st of July 1782. His courtesy of manner, kindness of heart and quickness of intelligence had conciliated the affection of all with whom he had associated; and in testimony of their regard, many of his friends attended him on horseback to a considerable distance on his road. Mr. Rœderer accompanied him as far as Paderborn, and within a few hours after their final separation addressed to him a warm effusion of his own feelings, and a most unsophisticated description of the interest taken in his welfare by the whole town. This interest extended itself even into the highest circles and the little court of the reigning prince; for in several of his subsequent letters Mr. Rœderer says, that whenever he saw the Countess of Lippe she was sure to ask him, "Was macht denn der

Herr Taylor*?" and after mentioning one instance of her having made this inquiry, he exclaims most emphatically, "O mein lieber Britte, Sie sind bei mehreren als mir unvergesslich †." The following translation of a letter from Mr. Clostermeyer to Mr. Taylor, sen., affords the additional evidence of an impartial and unimpeachable witness of his son's conduct and attainments.

"Detmold, 28th July, 1782.

"Sir,

"When you entrusted to us your most valued treasure, it was my earnest desire that your son's stay amongst us might answer in every respect the end which you had in view, and prove also comfortable and agreeable to himself. Not many of the wishes formed by mortals have been so fully gratified as mine with regard to this young gentleman. For in the first place he has improved to the utmost the instructions given him by Mr. Rœderer, and by applying with great assiduity to the reading of our best authors, he has acquired an extensive and well-grounded knowledge of our language, which he thoroughly understands, and speaks with great fluency. With respect also to his situation here, his satisfaction was so

* "How is Mr. Taylor going on?"

† "Oh my dear Briton, there are many besides myself who will never forget you."

openly and candidly manifested, that blindness itself must have perceived it; so that from this, as well as from the lively and affecting sorrow which he testified when taking leave of us, I am convinced that our friendship compensated in his estimation for the want of those amusements which a town of more importance than Detmold might have afforded. Fully therefore am I persuaded that he does not repent of having passed with us one year of his life. This ought now to be my consolation under the painful feelings excited by the departure of a friend whom I so highly esteemed. Although I have always said to myself that the enjoyment of your son's conversation was a transient blessing, granted to me by Heaven only for a short time, still I cannot reconcile myself to the loss of his society. But you, sir, and your lady are already anticipating the happiness of meeting again that dear son, who returns to you as worthy of your affection as when he left you. He comes to you adorned with all those noble endowments which your cares have so successfully cultivated, and still retaining that strong bias towards everything praiseworthy which constitutes genuine virtue. Give way therefore, after a long and painful separation, to the joy of being reunited to a son, who cannot fail to render you the happiest of parents. Most earnestly do I wish that my pu-

pils may imitate the excellent example which his conduct has afforded to them, and with which their father was so charmed, that he is continually recommending it to them in the strongest terms. Happy beyond expression will he be if his sons should hereafter resemble yours. As for myself, I shall ever preserve a most affectionate remembrance of my young friend, and feel for him the most disinterested regard. This regard will terminate only with my life; and should the ardently-desired opportunity of serving him ever be afforded to me, I shall prove myself sincere by my ready zeal to be useful to him, however remote the distance at which he may be placed from me. Be so kind as to present my respectful compliments to your lady, and be persuaded that I shall ever be, with sentiments of unfeigned esteem, sir,

"Your most humble and obedient Servant,

"CLOSTERMEYER."

From Paderborn William Taylor proceeded by way of Cassel, Gœttingen and Weimar, to Leipsic. He was furnished with letters of introduction to Schlœtzer, Angelica Kaufmann, and Gœthe. In his correspondence with his father and mother he does not make the slightest reference to his interviews with any of these distinguished characters; yet that he did see them is

clearly proved by passages in Mr. Rœderer's letters, in one of the earliest of which he is reproached by the writer for having neglected to give him more particular information respecting Schlœtzer: "Sie schreiben nichts von Schlœtzer als dass Sie ihm meinen Brief gegeben: das zeigt von keiner näheren Bekanntschaft die Ihnen der Brief mit dem Manne verschaffte. Dürfte ich Sie näher fragen*?" The omission here complained of seems to have been satisfactorily supplied, for in a subsequent communication Mr. Rœderer says, "Ihre Nachrichten von Schlœtzer, von der Kaufmann, waren mir, die eine angenehm, die andere interessant†." Gœthe's then newly acquired titles appear to have been overlooked in the direction of the letter addressed to him, of which William Taylor was the bearer. This was at that period a sin of unpardonable enormity in the general intercourse among Germans, and having been pointed out to Mr. Rœderer, drew from him the following observations, truly honourable to one who was then only rising into that celebrity which has since carried his name

* "You write nothing about Schlœtzer more than that you delivered my letter to him. This affords no indication of such nearer acquaintance as the letter was designed to procure you. May I ask you to let me know more?"

† "Your intelligence respecting Schlœtzer and the Kaufmann was, as regards the one agreeable, and the other interesting to me."

into the remotest regions of the earth. "Dass Gœthe Geheimder Rath ist, hatte ich wirklich vergessen; mir schwebte es indess halb vor; da ich ihn aber als Mann kenne, der nicht vom Titel gemacht ist, trug ich weniger Bedenken in der Addresse des Briefs pünktlich zu seyn. Er ist so gross, dass ich ihm auch gar keinen Titel auf den Brief hätte setzen dürfen, ohne darum weniger auf seine alte Liebe bauen zu dürfen. Glauben Sie mir, lieber Britte, ich kannte den Mann eh er Titel hatte, und sein Nahm ist mehr als Titel. Ist er ja schwach, so ist ers darinn, dass er *das* fühlt, und dann nenne ichs nicht Schwachheit. Dass er sich adlen lässt ist gewiss nur Sage. Ists aber Wahrheit, so hat er Ursachen, die in was anders als in Eitelkeit liegen*."

The preserved records of William Taylor's

* "I had indeed forgotten that Gœthe is now a Privy-Councillor: some faint idea of it might perhaps present itself to my mind; but knowing him as a *Man*, not made what he is by titles, I was the less observant of punctilio in directing my letter to him. He is so great of himself, that I could not have addressed him by any title without evincing a want of reliance upon his ancient affection for me. Believe me, dear Briton, I knew him before he had a title, and his name is more than a title. If he be weak, it is in being conscious of *this*, and such I cannot admit to be weakness. That he is about to be ennobled must be an idle report. Should it be true, he has reasons for it that are founded upon anything but vanity."

progress through this part of Germany are unusually scanty and meagre. Freshly imbued as he then was with a warm love of the literature of the country, he cannot have passed through that district which was the seat and centre of its most brilliant efforts, and personally known some of its most distinguished writers, without comments and observations that would have been now highly interesting. They were probably contained in letters to his friend Sayers or his Detmold correspondents, which are either destroyed or unattainable.

At Leipsic he met his former companion and fellow-traveller, Mr. Casenave, with whom he thence procceded to Berlin and Dresden, and traversed the kingdom of Prussia as far as Kœnigsberg. They even contemplated extending their journey to St. Petersburg; but having heard of a vessel about to sail from Pillau, a small port situated at the extremity of the narrow neck of land between the Freshhaven Lake and the Baltic Sea, they embarked there for England. On the 12th of October they landed at Elsineur for a short time; but after passing the Sound, they encountered a violent storm which drove them on the coast of Norway, and they narrowly escaped being wrecked near Cramstad. The vessel was nine hours on a rock, from which it was not extricated without consi-

derable damage, the reparation of which detained them several days at Arendal. At length, however, they arrived in safety at Yarmouth, and reached Norwich on Sunday the 17th of November.

CHAPTER II.

1782 to 1791.

ACCOUNT OF MR. TAYLOR FROM THE TIME OF HIS RETURN FROM GERMANY TO THAT OF HIS RETIRING FROM BUSINESS.

After an absence of three years and three months, excepting the interval of a few weeks between his return from France and his departure for Germany, William Taylor now came back to his native city at the age of seventeen, to fulfill the highly-raised expectations of his friends. His natural talents had been assiduously cultivated, his early acquirements carefully improved. In him the great end of education, so rarely attained, had been accomplished—he had been taught to think for himself. Neither cramped by precedent nor misled by prejudice, he was prepared to approach any subject without timidity, to regard it in all its bearings, to trace its facts and pursue its truths into their remotest hiding-places. He brought with him the stores of a literature then little known in England; he had cultivated it without pedantry, affectation, or fanaticism; not as an exotic wonder, the rarely-blowing show-plant of some privileged

conservatory, but as the native growth of the common field of reason, thriving under every sky where the blighting mildews of bigotry have ceased to fall. The tolerant liberality which he had imbibed gave a consistent tone to all his opinions. He did not condemn or look askance upon others for that free exercise of private judgement which he claimed and practised for himself. His spirit was as unsoured by the acrimony of party, as his mind was superior to the reserve of exclusiveness. Always willing to impart what he knew, he was communicative, conversible and social; always earnest to stimulate the faculties of others, he was ingenious and argumentative, never disputatious or overbearing. In matters of fact he respected, sought after and weighed authority; but in matters of opinion he could not be its slave. He could not "hitch into the rut" along which the mass of mankind are content to be dragged in tame submission to their leaders; nor could he take delight in that monotonous clanking of the gyves and manacles of servile imitation, which is so often miscalled learning, in order to conceal the ignorance of those who cannot, and excuse the indolence of those who will not, inquire for themselves. The moral courage, which the

> "Negatâ tentat iter viâ,
> . . . . . et udam
> Spernit humum fugiente pennâ,"

was truly his; and even those who may think that his daring flight sometimes carried him into clouds of error, must either be conscious of some unsoundness in their own opinions, or view with a strange obliquity his character and motives, if they assert that this courage was not in him a virtue.

These habits and dispositions had been traced by his education previously to his returning to settle in Norwich; they were more fully developed, and progressively rendered more distinctly apparent, by the circumstances in which he was there placed. He now applied himself assiduously to the labours of the counting-house; but accustomed to rise early, he always devoted his morning hours to study, before the regular business of the day commenced. His evenings were usually passed in the enjoyment of social intercourse with an extensive circle of friends, whom the respectable station and courteous hospitality of his parents had collected around them, and whose numbers were gradually increased by the reputation of his own literary attainments and conversational powers. His father was an acute, shrewd, and honourable man, with more restlessness than energy, and more eccentricity than talent. He had been trained from his early youth to mercantile pursuits, and conducted them with skill, integrity and success.

The character of the merchant-manufacturers of Norwich at that period was influenced in a very extraordinary degree by the circumstances in which they were placed. The nature of their transactions brought them seldom into immediate contact with the foreign correspondents and distant customers to whom they were under obligation as the purchasers of their manufactures, and the promoters of their fortunes. Their personal conferences in matters of business were held almost exclusively with those who were either dependent upon them for their daily bread, or who were more or less benefited by the operations of their trade. All the humility of gratitude which they had to profess was expressed in a few set phrases, so often repeated in their letters, as to leave no impression on their minds: that, on the contrary, of which they were the objects was conveyed in looks of awe, gestures of submission, and acts of homage. Accustomed to have all their commands instantly and implicitly obeyed, they too often became proud and severe, impatient and authoritative, overbearing and dictatorial. Reverenced as patrons, they acquired the influence of lords; and, in a different state of social relations, the elements of discord which were thus let loose, might, after ages of intestine strife, have

rendered Norwich, like another Florence, the patrimony of a merchant-prince.

The position which the father of William Taylor occupied in this class of patricians entitled him to share largely in the obsequious respect which their clients paid them. Hence perhaps arose all the little defects of his character. If his firmness sometimes reached to the extreme of inflexibility, or his independence assumed a tone of haughtiness, it may be ascribed to this cause. But there was in him a fund of cheerfulness and good-humour which redeemed his faults, and after his retirement from business they greatly abated. Even before that change, his austerity towards his inferiors would relax, while enjoying his pipe and glass of wine. He was a lover of company, and founded many clubs for social conviviality, which he distinguished by quaint but appropriate names*. Certainly, however, it was in the frequent exercise of a generous domestic hospitality that his

* Among these were "The Chips of Good Humour," and "The Enemies of Incivility." To the latter Dr. Sayers addressed in the year 1808, the following free imitation of Horace's "Persicos odi, puer, apparatus:"

Dinners of form I vote a bore,
Where folks who never met before,
And care not if they ne'er meet more,
Are brought together;

good qualities were brought out to the greatest advantage. He occupied a genteel house in Surrey Street, which is one of the best in Norwich. An orderly arrangement in little things, a strict regard to minor conveniences, elegance without ceremony, kindness without officiousness, ease without indecorum, characterized the welcome uniformly given to the many guests invited to his cheerful board. To this happy result Mrs. Taylor had the merit of largely contributing. She was unquestionably one of the most amiable of women: invariable benevolence marked her course in all the relations of life, while she met its vicissitudes with the most undisturbed equanimity. Her first care was to promote the comforts of her husband and son: the whole management of her house was conducted with this view. The numerous visitors

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Cramm'd close as mackerel in their places,
They eat with Chesterfieldian graces,
Drink healths, and talk with sapient faces
About the weather.
Thrice blest who at an inn unbends
With half a dozen of his friends,
And while the curling smoke ascends
In volumes sable,
Mirth and good-humour round him sees,
Chats, lolling backward at his ease,
Or cocks his cross'd legs, if he please,
Upon the table.

by whom it was frequented were always received by her with a cordial smile; their tastes were consulted in the entertainment provided; their self-love gratified by her unaffected and unforced attentions. Even her loss of sight, a calamity which clouded the last twenty-two years of her life, did not detract from her activity and usefulness. She endured the privation not merely with patience but with cheerfulness, regretting it only so far as it might incapacitate her for the discharge of her duty to others. Her efforts to give them pleasure seemed to be redoubled by the fear of accidental omissions or imaginary neglect. In her household all was so methodical and well-ordered, that no diminution of her superintending care was ever perceptible; and when, about twelve months before her death, some reduction of their fortune rendered a change of residence necessary, she accommodated herself so readily to the altered circumstances both of place and means, that she became at once familiar with every part of her new habitation, and directed its arrangements with the same precision of adjustment and the same felicity of effect. Lovely is the character and inestimable the value of such a helpmate. Her influence exceeds any that can be derived from wealth, learning, or talent—she forms and rules the hearts of all within her sphere. It has been

truly said, that most of those who have evinced superior qualities in their passage through life were blessed with good mothers. The mother of William Taylor was indeed a pattern to her sex. From her husband and son she received in return every mark of the most unbounded affection. The care and attention of the latter were exemplary, and extorted approbation even from prejudice itself. Supported by his arm, guided in her darkness by his hand, she appeared to think that the infirmity which was soothed by him rendered her an object of envy. His acquirements were her pride, his fame was her glory ; and when she heard his praises from the lips of others, the tear that glistened in her sightless eye was perhaps the most delicious that the tenderest of parents ever shed.

To a mansion thus regulated, and to hosts thus kindly disposed, the resort of guests would naturally be willing and constant. They were generally received at small dinner-parties, varying in number from six to nine or ten, and many of those who were in the habit of meeting there were distinguished for superior and cultivated talents. At the time of William Taylor's return from the continent, and for several years afterwards, there was more mind afloat in Norwich than is usually found out of the literary circles of the metropolis. A section of its society, by no means

inconsiderable in point of numbers, was remarkable for those intellectual pursuits by which liberality of feeling, variety of information, and purity of taste are eminently attained. Many of those of whom it was composed have soared beyond the narrow range of local celebrity, and occupied no obscure places as contributors to the literature of their country. Besides William Taylor himself, Dr. Sayers and the Rev. J. Bruckner, whose names have already been mentioned in this memoir, there were also the Rev. George Cadogan Morgan*, the Rev. R. Alderson†, the Rev. Dr. Enfield‡, Sir James Edward Smith§, Hudson Gurney, Esq.‖, Sigismund Trafford, Esq. (who afterwards took the name of Southwell), Dr. Lubbock¶, Dr. Rigby**, Dr.

* Nephew of the celebrated Dr. Price, and author of Lectures on Electricity, and other works.

† Afterwards a barrister, and Recorder of Norwich, Yarmouth, and Ipswich. He is frequently mentioned in the Rev. T. Crompton's Notes to Lord Chedworth's Letters. His eldest son is Sir E. H. Alderson, Baron of the Exchequer.

‡ Author of the Institutes of Natural Philosophy, History of Philosophy, History of Liverpool, Essays on Elocution, many Sermons, &c., &c.

§ Founder and first President of the Linnæan Society. His various works are so universally known, that it would be useless to enumerate them here.

‖ Many years Member of Parliament for Newton, and Vice-President of the Society of Antiquaries.

¶ Author of a treatise De Principio Sorbili.

** Author of some valuable medical works, and of several tracts on Agriculture and the Management of the Poor.

Alderson, his accomplished daughter, since so highly distinguished as Mrs. Opie, Mrs. Hunter*, the Rev. Pendlebury Houghton†, Henry Kett, Esq. ‡, the Rev. John Walker §, P. M. Martineau, Esq.‖, Mr. and Mrs. John Taylor¶, Dr.

* Author of Mrs. Palmerston's Letters, and of several elegant and moral Novels. See Life of Sayers, pp. lxxxvi and cxvii.

† Many years the minister of the Octagon Chapel, whose pulpit-oratory was so deliberately admired by Dr. Sayers, that he once inquired of William Taylor whether he "had ever heard in England or on the continent a preacher on the whole superior." Life of Sayers, p. lxvi. He published many of his Sermons, as well as Prayers and Practical Lessons for the use of Families.

‡ "A Pamphlet on the Controversy between Hume and Warburton was ascribed to him." Life of Sayers, p. lxxii.

§ Author of various Poems. Ibid. lxxi.

‖ An eminent surgeon, whose skilful operations tended much to enhance the reputation of the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital. He was uncle to the present distinguished authoress, Miss Harriet Martineau. A memoir of his life was published in 1831, part of which was written by William Taylor.

¶ There was no connexion of relationship between this estimable couple and William Taylor. Many interesting particulars in reference to them occur in the Life of Sir James Mackintosh, vol. i. pp. 147, 165, 443. Mr. John Taylor was a grandson of the eminent Hebraist and theologian of the same name. Mrs. Taylor is the "Madame Roland of Norwich" in Sir James Mackintosh's letter to Mr. Sharp, p. 215, and she was the intimate friend of Mrs. Barbauld. (See the Life of our English Sappho by Lucy Aikin, p. lv, and the second volume of her works, p. 142.) A few occasional poems, hymns and songs, written by Mr. John Taylor, some of which were also set to music by him, are the only printed memorials that are left of the high station which these excellent persons occupied in the literary society of Norwich.

Henry Reeve*, the Rev. Joseph Kinghorn†, Mr. W. Youngman‡, Sergeant Firth§, Charles Marsh, Esq.‖, Edward Barron, Esq., R. Plumptre, Esq., Thomas Starling Norgate, Esq.¶, John Pitchford, Esq.**, William Dalrymple, Esq., Joseph John Gurney, Esq.††, Thomas Amyot, Esq.‡‡,

* Author of an Essay on the Torpidity of Animals. Some account of his brief career has been given in the Life of Sayers, p. cxv, and more ample particulars will be found in a subsequent part of the present memoir.

† Author of various Sermons, and editor of Robertson's Clavis Pentateuchi.

‡ Author of a Memoir of the Rev. Thomas Harmer of Wattisfield, of a Letter on Dr. Wardlaw's Lectures, and of an Essay on the Truth and Excellence of the Christian Revelation.

§ Author of several pamphlets on political and legal questions.

‖ Elected member for East Retford in the parliament of 1812, after which he published his speech on Missions to India, and some pamphlets on Indian affairs. He also wrote a Vindication of the political conduct of the Rt. Hon. W. Windham, and was the reputed author of 'The Clubs of London.'

¶ Author of a volume of Essays, Tales, and Poems.

** Son of a much-respected surgeon, of whom an account is given by Sir J. E. Smith in his 'Biographical Memoirs of Norwich Botanists;' see Transactions of the Linnæan Society, vol. vii. p. 300.

†† His reports on the state of the prisons visited by him and his sister, Mrs. Fry, are as well known to the benevolent, as his numerous theological works are appreciated by the religious, portion of the country.

‡‡ Treasurer to the Society of Antiquaries, author of the Life of the Rt. Hon. W. Windham, and contributor of many interesting papers to the Archæologia.

the Rev. T. F. Middleton*, the Rev. Robert Walpole†, and the Rev. F. Howes‡. These were all either contemporary or successive residents in Norwich between the years 1783 and 1815. Even the few among them who are unknown in the world of letters possessed abilities and acquirements of the highest order, which would have made them successful competitors for the laurel, if fortune, habit, or inclination had prompted the attempt. Around such a nucleus of talent there would naturally be formed a bright and invigorating atmosphere, in which a mind like William Taylor's would delight to expatiate, improving his knowledge by display, and strengthening his powers by exercise. He was brought into it under auspicious circumstances that favoured the boldness and freedom of his flight. To those who, like himself, were just entering into life, he had every recommendation to make his acquaintance desirable, his friendship honourable; and even the learned of the highest and oldest standing were eager to extend the hand of encouragement to a youth, who exhibited not merely the

* Afterwards Bishop of Calcutta, author of a treatise on the Greek article, and of other works.

† Author of a memoir on Turkey, Specimens of Scarce Translations, &c.

‡ Author of a translation of Persius, and of a volume of Miscellaneous Poetical Translations.

ordinary presages of future eminence, but also the first spoils of a recently explored land, abounding in information equally new and useful even to them.

The parents of William Taylor were regular attendants on the religious service of the Octagon Chapel, a dissenting society originally Presbyterian, subsequently Unitarian; and he was trained up in, and adhered to, the same community. Fortunately, however, at the period which we are now reviewing, sectarian antipathies were dormant in Norwich. The members of the Church of England were agitated by no real or pretended fears for the safety of their establishment; and those who disputed its articles, or seceded from its discipline, were content with the unmolested profession and practice of their various modes of faith and forms of worship. The ministers and congregation of the Octagon Chapel appeared to be particularly disposed to meet their brethren of the Church on that common ground of social good-will, where the truly religious of every denomination might always be brought together without compromise or offence. They sedulously cultivated an approximating intimacy wherever they were met by an accordant feeling. Polemical preaching was unknown in their pulpit; and dropping every offensive or restrictive doc-

trinal appellation, they simply designated themselves by the comprehensive term of Protestant Dissenters. It is pleasant to see the better qualities of the head and heart thus prevailing over prejudice and passion. These conciliatory overtures produced that wide-spread harmony which is the charm of social intercourse, and promotes a general co-operation in pursuit of every desirable object. Sects forgot their fanaticism, parties laid aside their acrimony, rival pretensions concealed their jealousy ; all united under the common banner of universal courtesy, and it is from this period that Norwich dates either the foundation or the extension and prosperity of some of its most useful and successful public institutions*.

William Taylor, in his ' Life of Dr. Sayers ' (p. lxii.), has recorded a striking instance of the beneficial effects resulting from this state of feeling. In his list of the Speculative Society,

* The Public Library originated in the year 1784, and its members have recently erected for themselves one of the best edifices in the city. The Norfolk and Norwich Hospital was established a few years earlier; but it grew and flourished under these auspices. Even in the year 1801, after the events of the times had disturbed much of this state of peace, when the Rev. P. Houghton announced his intention of preaching a sermon for the benefit of this charity at the Octagon Chapel, it attracted a numerous congregation of all sects, and one of the largest collections ever made on such an occasion was the reward of his benevolent and persuasive eloquence.

we find that out of twelve members, of which it consisted, there were three ministers of the Church (the Rev. P. Hansell, the Rev. Gee Smith, and the Rev. J. Walker, two of them Minor Canons of the Cathedral), and three ministers of dissenting congregations, the Rev. Dr. Enfield, the Rev. P. Houghton, and the Rev. B. Hart, all of whom, dismissing sectarian differences, could meet on equal terms to cultivate unrestricted inquiry, and seek for truth by amicable discussion. The violent controversies arising out of the French Revolution first darkened these halcyon days; since which the growing fanaticism and mutual intolerance of sects afford a lamentable contrast to the picture just drawn. This however is a subject on which it would be as painful to dilate as it would be foreign to the object of this memoir.

But the previous tone of Norwich society has too close a relation to the history of William Taylor's mind to be overlooked here; and it is highly gratifying to his biographer, that in tracing this sketch, his duty demanded a record, to which, as a citizen, he can refer with so much satisfaction and pride.

Those who have studied the working of the intellectual powers, and in the case now brought before them, bestowed any notice on the progressive influence of education and circumstances, cannot fail to perceive how wide a scope

was afforded for the development of character and the exercise of William Taylor's peculiar talents and acquirements, in the position which he occupied after his return from Germany. The orderly employment of the counting-house assisted in giving a regular and consistent direction to pursuits which had hitherto been somewhat desultory and devoid of system. That exemption from the check of personal obligation, the effects of which in common minds are an imperious bearing and haughty love of sway, served only to render him more self-dependent and original, to invigorate and embolden his freedom of thought, and to shape his opinions less by the example or approbation of others. Nor did this indicate either a contemptuous disesteem of them, or an overweening regard of himself. His kindness approached even to humility and self-depreciation. The charities of his nature were always alive, and their warmth and activity were promoted in the friendly circles that were drawn together by the hospitalities of his father's house. There too his abilities were kept in constant exercise; and his ingenuity was employed more to call forth the powers of others than to display his own. The liberal disposition that prevailed around him allowed also a considerable latitude to his speculations; and at that early period of his career he could indulge even a sportive and innocent heresy, without fearing to

offend the squeamish or incur the misrepresentations of bigots.

His most intimate connexion was with his friend Sayers, who in 1783 was residing with his mother in the picturesque village of Thorpe, at the distance of two miles from Norwich. Here their intercourse was constant, and their attachment grew mutually stronger in proportion as their congenial love of literature and general similarity of tastes disclosed themselves more fully. "It was now," says William Taylor, when referring to this period in his 'Life of Sayers' (p. xix.), "that our friendship became truly intense. In his society were always found both instruction and delight; at this time I first fancied my society was become of value to him. I could describe Paris, and, what he more delighted to hear about, Rome and Naples. The literature of Germany, then almost unknown in England, I had pervasively studied, and was eager to display; and frequently I translated for his amusement such passages as appeared to me remarkable for singularity or beauty. We read the same English books, in order to comment them when we met. My morning walk was commonly directed to Thorpe; we prolonged the stroll on the then uninclosed heath, and he frequently returned with me to Norwich, dined at my father's table, and took me back to tea with his mother."

This is a delightful picture of early friendship, deriving from the purest sources, and tending to the best of all objects, the improvement of the head and heart. On William Taylor's side (nor do I mean to impute them to his friend) there could be no suspicion of those calculating, worldly and selfish motives by which young men are commonly decided in the choice of their acquaintance. His standing in society was higher than that of Sayers, and even its highest distinctions appeared then to be within his reach. His father's house, replete with every comfort, and frequented by the cheerful, the accomplished and the learned, presented attraction to a youth of talent and spirit, for which the village residence of a widow of moderate income could offer no equivalent. In all the advantages arising from instructive converse, interchange of knowledge, and communion of mind, they were at least on equal terms; since whatever superiority might be awarded to the one for the greater extent of his classical studies and English reading, the other was certainly not less eminent in his ability to dispense the richer and more original stores of travelled experience, as well as those which he had culled from the whole literature of modern Europe. If then their friendship had thus been weighed in the scales of a mere worldly-minded prudence, it is evident that the preponderance of profit would have been de-

cidedly in favour of Sayers; so that William Taylor's attachment to him can by no possibility be ascribed to any interested views. It was not "a shade that follows wealth or fame;" it was not a clinging to the skirts of one who was to drag him up to eminence and notice; it was that enthusiasm of personal regard, that overflowing of generous kindness, and that gushing forth of honest affection, which belong to the dignities of our nature, and, while they warm the heart, exalt the character of man.

In October 1783 Sayers commenced his studies at Edinburgh, where he was visited by his friend in the following summer, and a part of the time which they passed together was spent in travelling through some of the neighbouring Highlands. The letters written by William Taylor during this excursion have been preserved; but their interest is superseded by the condensed summary which he has given in his 'Life of Sayers', of the impressions left on his mind by this visit to the northern capital, and the mountain scenery of its adjacent districts*. This being already before the public in the form which his maturer judgement approved, suggests the pro-

* Life of Sayers, p. xxvi. "The summer of 1787" is here inadvertently assigned as the period at which this journey was undertaken, whereas all the letters which he wrote during the course of it are dated in May and June 1784. This

priety of suppressing the more diffuse and crude observations which his earlier correspondence exhibits. There may however be found in them trains of thought and flights of fancy, indicative of forming opinions, which afterwards became settled principles. At a more advanced period of his life, he always maintained that there is greater pleasure in beholding artificial masses, which show how far the gifts of nature can be applied and improved by the powers of man, than in looking upon those gifts in their original and uncultivated state, however beautiful the forms in which they may be presented to our view. This latent sentiment evidently dictated the more animated strains in which he described the "magnificent city" of Edinburgh: "the High Street, the long and the broad," with its edifices "piled seemingly by a people of giants"—and "the bridges, which, like aqueducts of antiquity, carry from hill to hill an endless stream of people;" while there is a comparative coldness in the admiration which he expressed for "the picturesque banks of the Tay," "the groves of Dunkeld," and "the shiny morning of visual rapture spent afloat on Loch Tay." The

anachronism ought to be corrected, as future commentators may possibly discover, that some of the college companions, in whose society he described Sayers as then living, had left Edinburgh before the year 1787.

pilgrimage, "then sympathetic," of the two friends to the sepulchre of Hume might suggest many reflections on those oscillations of opinion to which the human mind is subject. William Taylor says of Sayers, that he was then "decidedly the bolder theologian of the two—a relation," he adds, "which was afterwards to be reversed." Such transitions, from the extreme of scepticism in youth to that of credulity in age, are the resiliences that usually take place, where impulse has "overstepped the modesty of nature," and hazarded premature decisions, unprepared by calm inquiry and unconfirmed by deliberate judgement. Dissatisfied with its own hasty conclusions, the sanguine temperament imagines that it can find no safety from error but in the most opposite point, and flies thither with equal vehemence in its eager search after excellence and truth. This was the case with Sayers; and the excess of his fears hurried him into such intolerance of his early opinions, that he anxiously destroyed every record of them. It is impossible, and if possible it would be perhaps unwise, to set limits to the eccentricities of genius; but in the midst of its perihelion glories it should learn to regard with charity those who are wandering in the dark aphelion from which its own course has so recently emerged. In William Taylor, on the contrary, the ardour of youth did

not assume that decided tone, which so frequently expires in recantation and repentance. His disposition to inquire sympathized indeed with his friend's precocious anticipation of inquiry, and led him a willing pilgrim to the sepulchre of Hume; he did homage to the spirit of the profound thinker and fearless philosopher; but, in forming his own opinions, he had not then advanced beyond speculation and discussion. To what extent his own subsequent progress in that direction may have assisted in reversing the former relative positions of himself and his friend, it is not my intention to examine. Religious belief is amenable to no mortal censorship, unless it can be plainly shown to have prompted evil deeds; and they who claim such a right, usurp an authority more than human. Wishing to avoid needless recurrence to this topic, I may be allowed here briefly to observe, that whatever creed William Taylor may have eventually adopted, it was the result of extensive research and deep reading; it betrayed him into no inconsistency; it engendered in him no acrimony; it cooled no early friendship; it neither chilled his benevolence nor narrowed his charity; nor did it deaden in him that "pure and undefiled religion" of the heart, which most creeds profess to inculcate, but too often fail to inspire. Accustomed to investigate everything, he regarded as fair subjects

for discussion even what are generally held to be unquestionable and sacred truths; still his inquiries were free alike from the insolence of dogmatism and the obduracy of prejudice. But their novelty alarmed the timid; their boldness offended those who acquiesced in the popular doctrines; and he was assailed by an obloquy as ungenerous as it was unmerited. Speculative suggestions, unpremeditatedly started in the flow of conversation or the warmth of debate, were often imputed to him as deliberately formed opinions; and although no man was ever less imbued with the zeal of proselytism, he was accused of endeavouring to shake the faith and make converts of all with whom he associated. It would be well if those who view with so much jealousy, and condemn with so much asperity, the free exercise of reason, would bestow some attention on past events; they might learn to doubt their own infallibility, and moderate the severity of their strictures on others, by observing in how many instances long-established belief has passed away as an exploded error, and the repudiated heresy of one generation has become the law-protected canon of another.

After his return from this excursion, William Taylor appears to have remained four years quietly fixed in Norwich, dividing his time be-

tween the occupations of the counting-house and the pursuit of his studies. In the former, on his coming of age, he was interested as a partner; but although he seems to have discharged scrupulously and punctiliously the duties thus undertaken, still he was not formed for business; neither its stirring excitements, nor the influence to be derived from it, nor the alluring prospect of gain, could stimulate him to earnest competition, or win him from the cultivation of those literary tastes which he had early acquired, and which grew stronger as he advanced in life. By these his habits were formed. He applied himself assiduously to an extensive course of reading, embracing the best writers of poetry, history, travels, philology, metaphysics and theology. In these departments, scarcely any work of eminence, either ancient or modern, was not studied by him in the original. To the other languages of which we have already seen that he was master, he now added a knowledge of Spanish; so that the whole standard literature of the Western world may be said to have been open to his researches, without a translator's aid, and he collected from it those stores by which his conversations and his compositions were afterwards so abundantly enriched. He had always a passion for the uncommon and recondite. It was not a love of singularity; it

was an exploring curiosity, an investigating tact, a strong conviction, that as in the days of Juvenal, so also now,

> "Pauci dignoscere possunt
> Vera bona, atque illis multum diversa, remotâ
> Erroris nebulâ."

Surveying with a free and keen glance the opinions of mankind, he saw how frequently the hidden sources of truth were neglected, and specious errors obtruded by the cant of fashion upon indolent credulity. Hence what others passed over or could not reach, was eagerly sought after and seized upon by him. He had always at command historical facts and apposite illustrations, derived from authorities which few besides himself had ever consulted. On these he reasoned in his own peculiar manner; and if his inferences were not uniformly sound, they always had a stamp of originality, a zest of novelty, a charm of ingenuity, which interested all to whom they were addressed, and urged them irresistibly to think and examine for themselves. It is to this disposition and these acquirements that Sir James Mackintosh refers in one of his letters to Dr. Sayers*, where he speaks humorously of "Rabbi Williamki Ben Taylorki's very curious annotations on the Chaldee Targum." But we find in a subsequent letter† to Mrs. John Taylor

* Life of Sir James Mackintosh, p. 377. † Ibid, p. 443.

of Norwich, the following more serious and decided encomium from the same distinguished writer:—"I can still trace William Taylor by his Armenian dress, gliding through the crowd, in Annual Reviews, Monthly Magazines, Athenæums, &c., rousing the stupid public by paradox, or correcting it by useful or seasonable truth. It is true that he does not speak the Armenian, or any other language but the Taylorian; but I am so fond of his vigour and originality, that for his sake I have studied and learned his language. As the Hebrew is studied for one book, so is the Taylorian by me for one author. He never deigns to write to me but in print. I doubt whether he has many readers who so much understand, relish and tolerate him, for which he ought to reward me by some of his manuscript esoterics." Such tributes from so high a quarter are unequivocal testimonials of a combination of genius and industry rarely to be met with. They tell of talents of no common order, cultivated with persevering assiduity, and guided by restless aspirations after a genuine and satisfying knowledge; and they excite curiosity to watch the process by which the "laudari à laudato," the praise of the illustrious, was thus signally merited and obtained. William Taylor became known to Sir James (then Mr.) Mackintosh at the time of his first visit to Edinburgh, and their

acquaintance was afterwards renewed when the future Recorder of Bombay periodically sojourned in Norwich during his connexion with the bar of the Norfolk circuit. They mutually held in high regard each other's talents, and sympathized in tastes, principles and opinions. The evidence of these sentiments which I have just adduced, is extracted from passages in letters written from India at a subsequent period, and, as inserted here, may perhaps be regarded as an inappropriate anticipation of the course of events; but it has been thus introduced, because it seems calculated to assist in heightening the interest, and placing in a more distinct light the objects of the intervening narrative.

In the year 1788 William Taylor revisited Edinburgh. The letters written at that time by Sayers manifested so decided a tendency to hypochondriasis, that the most alarming apprehensions were excited, as to the possible consequences that might ensue from such a state of mind. His mother and his friend flew to his relief. This induced him to quit Edinburgh, and to relinquish those medical studies, for which he was rendered unfit by too keen a sensibility to bodily suffering in others. By the soothing attentions of watchful kindness, and by judiciously diverting his thoughts into other channels, they succeeded in dispelling the gloom that had gathered

round him, and restored his feelings to a healthier tone. Amidst the lake-scenery of Cumberland and Westmoreland, the calm aspect of nature reflected its own serenity on him, and quieted the nervous irritation of his system. Having obtained an honorary degree at the University of Harderwyck, he settled in Norwich, where his friend, in their now uninterrupted and confidential intercourse, skilfully turned the current of his passions from the morbid despondency to which they had been tending, into the animating channel of a generous ambition. He awakened and kept alive in him a longing after fame, an eager desire

> ". . . . . to be for ever known,
> And make the age to come his own."

The result of this was the composition and publication of the 'Dramatic Sketches of Northern Mythology,' the well-merited dedication of which to himself, as "the offering of an attachment early-formed and uninterrupted," was always prized by William Taylor as "the dearest and proudest trophy of his life."

In this year the centenary of the Revolution was celebrated throughout England with an unusually fervid enthusiasm. It occurred at a period when the public mind was sensitively excited by the great changes which had recently been effected in France, and which were re-

garded as the commencement of a new and happier æra, not only for the people of that country, but for the whole human race. The horrible events, which afterwards converted these anticipations into alarm and despair, existed then only in the prophetic sagacity of scheming statesmen, who knew how to accomplish their own predictions and make the consequent despondency of generous minds a temporary bar to the progress of popular rights. It has since been fashionable to sneer at the philanthropy which conceived and exulted over the glowing visions of those days; but the lapse of half a century has somewhat calmed the passions, which in their brief hour of overbearing triumph could thus turn into ridicule some of the best feelings of human nature. The hopes thus contemptuously derided have been more coolly judged; the efforts thus contumeliously denounced have been more justly appreciated. Most of the immediate objects for which those benevolent spirits then struggled in vain, have been sanctioned by the growing intelligence of the age, and achieved by the irresistible potency of the national will. It cannot then be unreasonable to assume, that their higher views of social improvement, which have been scouted as chimerical, may be also attained by pursuing that system of general education and

that course of impartial government for which they contended.

William Taylor was among those who participated largely in the prevailing enthusiasm, and were most active in their endeavours to realize its projects. He was naturally disposed to take a lively interest in all that seemed calculated to promote the happiness of his fellow-creatures; his education had taught him, that of all the foes to human happiness, tyranny is one of the most deadly; and his nearest and most intimate connections in life had always been among the most prompt to withstand it in every shape. We therefore find him foremost to concur in commemorating that event, which marked so great a step in the advance of British freedom, and afforded to other countries so glorious an example of successful resistance to arbitrary power, and of popular moderation in the use of victory. A festive meeting held in Norwich on the occasion here referred to, and repeated the following year, led to the formation of a local "Revolution Society," after the model of that established under the same designation in London. The William Taylors, both father and son, were active members and earnest supporters of this body: the former accepted the appointment of secretary, gratifying at once his taste for convi-

vial pleasures and his attachment to the cause of civil and religious liberty; while the latter appears to have conducted the correspondence, and to have been the framer of the various resolutions, addresses and reports which emanated from the Society. About this time also he published, under different signatures, in friendly newspapers, more particularly in the Cambridge Intelligencer, letters on the political questions by which the public mind was then agitated. Eager to be an eye-witness of the effect produced on the French people by the first introduction amongst them of the principles of free government, and to form an opinion for himself of the probable result, he visited in the year 1790 the scene of all these extraordinary changes. The following extracts from his correspondence at this period, will afford the best evidence of his feelings, observations and hopes.

"Calais, Sunday, 9th May, 1790.

"At length I have kissed the earth on the land of liberty. A breezy quick pleasant voyage of three hours and a half brought me hither. I am still a little the worse for my rocking and tossing, but hope to have rested so far by three o'clock in the morning as to enjoy proceeding to Paris. The national cockade is still fading on many a hat, recording, like amber-drops on the Baltic shore, the vehemence of the assuaging storm of

revolution. The letters I have from Dr. Price are to the Duke de la Rochefoucault, and to Monsieur de Keralio."

"Paris, 14th May, 1790.

"I got here last night, and hoped to have been met by your letters congratulating my arrival within these dazzling precincts of freedom. I am at length in that point of space, where the mighty sea of truth is in constant agitation, and every billow dashes into fragments some deep-rooted rock of prejudice, or buries in a viewless gulph some institution of gothic barbarism and superstition. I am at length in the neighbourhood of the National Assembly, that well-head of philosophical legislation, whose pure streams are now overflowing the fairest country upon earth, and will soon be sluiced off into the other realms of Europe, fertilizing all with the living energy of its waters. I am at length in Paris, and happy; and it is with the *Nemesis* of one conscious of the dignity of human nature, that I feel disposed to retort upon Dr. Johnson,

> Applaud enthusiasm on a theme like this:
> Oh, how I love a French Metropolis!

"For this country it was reserved to prove, that science as she plumes her wings extends her power; till at last they shall overshadow the earth, and winnow from its surface every scat-

tered chaff of corruption. For this land it was reserved to offer the finest spectacle which the mind of Deity can contemplate, that of a nation of heroes obeying by choice a senate of sages.

"The French seem to love what we call standing in hot water, and seem able to bear it longer than any other people. All Paris is still in a ferment. The last sound which dies away upon the sleepy ear is the rattle of the patriot drums, and the first murmur which disturbs our rest is the martial music of the national militia. Every morning they are marched, exercised and reviewed, each division in its turn: every evening they parade the streets with ostentatious bustle. They guard every palace, and are stationed in every play-house. It is like living in a citadel besieged. In every street you are surrounded by hawkers of pamphlets with terrific titles, and every hour is startled with some new tale of terror. I have already thrown away many a sol for these whole sheets and half sheets, these hand-bills and pamphlets; but I find them in general trifling in matter, though declamatory and lofty in language. All tend to accuse the aristocrats of little or great treasons, to blacken their schemes or their persons, and to protract as much as possible a change which is certainly begun in the minds of the people, from hate of an oppressive nobility, to pity for a vanquished

foe. The clergy seem to fall unpitied even by their allies; of all the opprobrious titles by which the enemies to the new government are known, that of the priest-ridden party, or *parti des Capucins*, seems to teaze them most."

"Paris, 21st May, 1790.

"I have delivered my several letters of recommendation, and all seem likely to produce what I expected from them. The Duke de la Rochefoucault and the Vicomte de Noailles will give me tickets for the National Assembly. M. Lalaune and the Marquis de la Colonilla will give me breakfasts and conversation. M. de Keralio and M. Berquin will introduce me to literary societies. Messrs. Lecouteulx will give me money—but no; I have been able to obtain only assignats, and must sell them I suppose at ten per cent. loss.

"I have been to see Versailles, and have been much affected by its melancholy magnificence. A palace, or rather a city shaped into one building of hewn stone, situated on a commanding eminence, fronting on the east the regular streets of a fine town, and on the west the equally regular walks of an immense garden—has for a century attracted thither the curious of Europe; and everything that art can supply of beautiful, or expense of scarce, is heaped together on this enchanted spot. Endless ranges of rooms, ri-

valling each other in grandeur—halls walled with marble, and enriched with sculptured bronze—picture galleries and statue galleries—recur in long succession; but scarcely the traces of habitation. The furniture is concealed or removed, the wind whistles through the broken windows, echo counts your footsteps, and here and there a flock bed stands beneath a ceiling of Le Brun's. The genius of the place, mourning over his silent precincts, seems to whisper, "they were made for kings of other times." The garden, on the contrary, has lost nothing of its charms. The hall in which the National Assembly met originally is very stately, and better than that to which they are now removed in Paris. I have been to hear the debates more than once, and received much satisfaction. When the question is foreseen, the members make no scruple of reading their speeches upon the subject; after which it is usual to compliment them by passing a vote to request they would print their harangues. The question—Shall the king have the right of making war and peace?—is still undecided, after four days of debate, and will probably continue so till Saturday."

"Paris, June 5, 1790.

"I have spent nine days in the National Assembly, and heard almost all the eminent speakers. On two of these days the question of peace and

war was depending, which has agitated the people much more than any other debate during my stay. Of the wisdom, talent and taste displayed in every decree emanating from the National Assembly, I remain the most unqualified admirer. That their conduct is governed by the lofty motives they profess, is, I must think, extremely problematical. If however they be from interest generous, and from prudence forgiving, it is much the same to their enemies and to posterity. The deed still contributes to the happiness and instruction of society. Neither is information by any means so diffusive in France as I imagined. Of the active citizens (persons paying a yearly tribute of a mark of silver), nearly half, particularly in the country, can neither write nor read. Four provinces are now in a state of the most dangerous anarchy, in consequence of a fictitious decree of the National Assembly, promulgated by the discontented party, fixing the price of bread at a halfpenny the pound and of meat at twopence. The common people, conceiving it to be their duty, as well as their interest, to execute this decree, have been for a week under arms, destroying shambles and bakehouses without mercy. It will be some years before rank recovers its stability, and property its security, in this country. But indeed this state of things began to be wanted. The complete depravity of

the higher orders of society was such, and their indifference to the wretched state of the lower so great, that it was proper they should suffer, in order that they might learn to feel. There are no countries where distress is so readily relieved, as those where it visits all conditions of mankind, as in the despotic countries of the East. I trust that the actual circumstances of France will generate the same sympathizing spirit. The Count d'Artois and Monsieur are pensioned by the National Assembly—two millions each. The king is gone to St. Cloud, and the provinces can no longer suspect that he is a prisoner here. All announces a sort of pacification between administration and the legislative body; so that the executive power will lend its aid to tranquillize the country. I was witness to the splendid procession of the Fête Dieu. The king and queen had never before performed in Paris this office of devotion. The National Assembly having just reformed the clergy, and being anxious to quiet uneasy consciences about their religious views, agreed to attend in a body. The national militia, the municipal officers, all were displayed. It was a religious triumph of the Revolutionists."

From the tone of these letters it might be inferred, that the writer regarded the new order of things in France with a prejudiced and infatuated admiration. But he has left another docu-

ment, which proves how entirely his opinions were the result of his own freely exercised and deliberate judgement; and how independently of all authority or preconceived notions he took his own view of the nature and tendency of passing events. Soon after his return from Paris, he translated into English that portion of the decree passed by the National Assembly, on the 22nd of December, 1789, which related to the representative constitution, and he added many notes of his own on its different articles. He evidently intended this for publication, and made it first known by reading it at one of the meetings of the Norwich Revolution Society. These notes evince a considerate observation and grasp of mind, rarely to be met with in so young a man. Their spirit is perhaps too calmly philosophical to have suited the heated and declamatory temper of a political club; and it is therefore probable that they did not elicit from his brethren of the Norwich Revolution Society sufficient warmth of applause, to induce him to commit them at that time to the press. But, with some alterations, they were inserted ten years later in the eighth volume of the Monthly Magazine. On some points they seem to have anticipated the decision to which the British legislature has subsequently been brought by the slowly accumulated experience and tardy con-

viction of half a century; on others, they canvassed reforms and changes, which are now advocated by a large and powerful portion of the commonwealth; while in all of them there is a racy freshness of thought, and an independent tone of opinion, which must always conciliate even those lovers of truth who may dissent from the doctrines recommended. The policy of the government of that day was adverse to discussions like these; and all the most influential classes in the country combined to deprecate and resist any changes in our institutions or in their administrative forms. Severe measures were adopted to repress the agitation of such questions, and to put down the societies in which they were entertained. In many instances those who held official appointments in these bodies were arrested and their papers seized. The secretary of one club in Norwich had been already apprehended and conveyed to London. The Revolution Society was said to be on the proscribed list, and some of its leading members denounced as suspicious and disaffected characters: a warrant for their arrest was daily expected. In this state of fearful anticipation it was found that all the records of the Society uniformly presented William Taylor jun. as the secretary, the son having affixed his own distinguishing designation to his father's name, in or-

der to avert from the latter the danger to which he appeared to be exposed. Although the consequences that were apprehended did not ensue, still the peril was at the time believed to be real and imminent; and this act of self-devotion may therefore, in principle and intention, be paralleled with many of those heroic sacrifices of personal ease or safety, which have been consigned to the admiration of posterity. Whether prompted by filial piety alone, or by a sense of justice operating in conjunction with it, and prevailing with him to make himself responsible for writings of his own production, in either case it equally indicates an elevation of sentiment and generosity of virtue, which are certainly to be ranked amongst the highest of those "ends of being," to which the training of this mortal state is designed to lead. The Norwich Revolution Society was suffered to expire in peace; and from that time William Taylor appears to have taken no prominent or conspicuous part in any political discussions. His opinions however remained unaltered; and to the latest moment of his life he was strictly consistent in his support of the great principles of civil and religious liberty. On every occasion of exercising his elective franchise, either in the choice of local municipal officers or parliamentary representatives, he was invariably one of the earliest at the poll, to

record his vote in favour of the candidates friendly to the liberal cause, and he always contributed freely to every subscription raised for the promotion of that object. But he neither accepted nor sought after any civic office; and, except by serving from time to time on grand juries, he abstained from taking an active part or assuming a foremost station in any public business whatever, unless it were connected with literary objects. Still, when called upon to avow or defend his opinions, he used no concealment or evasion. The sonnet which he addressed to the author of 'Vindiciæ Gallicæ' on receiving a presentation copy of that work, is already known to the public; but this priority of introduction ought not to exclude it from its appropriate place here.

"Brave youth, thou foremost of the patriot throng,
Kneel yet awhile, and scoop with deeper shell,
And boldly quaff, and bathe thy glowing tongue,
In the pure spring-head of my hallow'd well,
While yet conceal'd, the mouldering trunks among,
Where error steeps in mist her twilight cell,
And superstition's reptiles crawl along—
But for the chosen few its waters swell.
My name is Truth—soon the blast roars amain,
Fires, lightning-kindled, the tall oaks emblaze,
Avenging thunders crash, while Freedom's fane
Arises radiant from the smoking plain.
Huge columns thou must rear—thy future days
A nation's thanks await—the Sage's praise."

To the same period and class belong also the two following sonnets.

ON THE RUINS OF THE NEW MEETING AT BIRMINGHAM.

" Few are the temples of the *Only God*,
Their roof weak Piety can scarce uphold,
While Polytheism proudly strides abroad,
And for her thousand temples heaps the gold.
Dear above all yon temple, where a sage,
Whom Virtue and whom Science join'd to raise,
Breath'd the warm prayer, explain'd the holy page,
Or wing'd to heaven the choral song of praise.
It lies in dust: ye winds the ashes spare—
Lest haply lighting where the just abide,
Unruffled Charity a frown should wear,
Lest meek Religion learn for once to chide,
Lest armed Liberty with vengeful hand
From Persecution's grasp should dash the kindled brand."

FOR THE RUIN AT BROOMSGROVE*.

" Russell, if through thy shatter'd, fire-swart hall
Unbow'd thou rovest, and with tearless eye,
'T is not that thou hast seen unmoved its fall,
But that thou feel'st it were a crime to sigh.
Remain it so,—thy trophy,—until all
In its o'erthrow thy virtue shall descry.
To suffer nobly is a victory.
From such to suffer, is the patriot's call.
Desertion's ivy wreaths may now intrude
Where Hospitality's fresh garlands lay—
But Freedom's awful form shall long be view'd
Amid the mouldering monument to stray,
Transported kiss each stone, and proudly say,
Come, ruin, come—but never servitude!"

* The residence of Mr. Russell, destroyed by the same mob that had attacked Dr. Priestley's chapel and dwelling-house.

So also in many of his subsequent contributions to the leading periodicals of that time, he reprobated with manly indignation the then too fashionable system of regarding the interest and rights of the many as subordinate to the advantages of the privileged few. He sometimes expressed this feeling in a strain of fervid eloquence, which verged upon an imprudent and dangerous boldness; and in one instance, conscious of being thus carried away, he checked himself by exclaiming, "But I mark the ghost of Gerald, planing over a sea-beat cove, pointing to the Banksia-shaded hermitage of Palmer, and gibbering—'Beware!'" He lived, however, to witness the triumph of those principles, which in his earlier days exposed their advocates to such persecution—to see justice accorded to the memory of those who had thus suffered in the cause of social improvement, and to have the infirmities of sinking age gladdened by the legislative consummation of the three principal measures, which in the ardour of youth he had so earnestly but ineffectually assisted in demanding*.

William Taylor's mind was indeed of too high

* It is scarcely necessary to observe, that the Abolition of Negro Slavery, the Repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, and the Reform of the House of Commons, were the three leading measures contended for by those, to whom, at the close of the last century, the epithets of Democrats and Jacobins were applied, to mark them out as objects of calumny and persecution.

an order to find congenial companions or worthy antagonists in the arena of political warfare. Important epochs, when great questions are at issue and great principles at stake, may induce generous minds to engage actively for a season in that career; but it is not their proper sphere. Their disinterested desires to promote the universal good are not understood by the artful plotters with whom they mingle, and whose selfish designs are carried forward under the specious mask of public-spirited exertion. They shrink disgusted alike from the coarse abuse and persecuting violence of their opponents, from the illiberal suspicions and low jealousies of their friends, and from the frequent sacrifices which they are called upon to make of principle to party. In William Taylor, moreover, the literary tastes which we have already seen to be forming, had by this time attained to such strength and predominance, as to supersede every other inclination, and indispose him to every other pursuit. Various adventitious circumstances had concurred to give additional weight to the bias of education and habit. On his return from Paris, he was invited to Cromer by his friend Sayers, in that poetical fragment, which was thought worthy by its author of being preserved in the final edition of his works*.

* Sayers's Collective Works, vol. i. p. 244.

The 'Dramatic Sketches of Northern Mythology' had then just been published. William Taylor shared warmly in the gratification which their success conferred on his friend. He was stimulated by his example, and emulous of his glory; nor was he less sensible of the favourable auspices under which his own name was ushered into public notice by the dedication of that work. He was conscious of possessing the ability, and this naturally encouraged the desire, to improve so flattering an introduction to future celebrity and fame. Amongst his friends and townsmen his literary character was already in the highest repute, and they were proud of pointing him out to strangers, as a young man of transcendent abilities*. The distinction thus acquired may well have fed the dream of wider renown, and the eager "longing after immortality," which genius loves to indulge. He had indeed founded on a solid basis his title to the esteem and good

* "My first introduction to William Taylor was in 1791. My friends had given me to understand that he was a very superior man. Some time afterwards, when I made a longer stay in Norwich, and saw more of him, the representations that had been previously made to me were abundantly confirmed, for I had then frequent occasion to admire not only his conversational talents in private company, but also the various knowledge and the brilliant imagination that he displayed at the Speculative Society."—*MS. Reminiscences of E. Barron, Esq.*

opinion of his fellow-citizens. From the first establishment of the Norwich Public Library, in 1784, he had been most constant and earnest in his endeavours to promote its success. The guiding influence of his mind may be perceived in the choice of a large portion of the works selected during its first years, to form the permanent store of its shelves. He also enhanced the value of these services by many donations from his own private collection, and by negociating with the corporation of the city for the transfer of their library to the care of the new institution. This last effort was at the time abortive. The object which it contemplated was however subsequently accomplished, but not till after the destruction of some valuable works and the wanton mutilation of others, which an earlier compliance with William Taylor's suggestion would have preserved from the sacrilegious hands of ignorant menials*. By these exertions he well merited the compliment of being elected in 1793 to the office of Vice-President, from which

* It will scarcely be credited, that a public body should, in so truly a dog-in-the-manger spirit, have been thus tenacious of the custody of books, which none of its members ever read or consulted, and yet have allowed its lowest underlings so unrestricted an access to them, that scores of leaves were with impunity torn out of the largest folio volumes, to light the fires of the room in which they were deposited, or for the commonest drudgery uses of waste paper.

he proceeded in regular course the following year to the President's chair. His name thus occupies one of the earliest places on a register, in which most of those who have been eminent in Norwich for talents, wealth or station, have considered it an honour to be enrolled.

In the year 1790 two societies were established in that city, for the private and amicable discussion of miscellaneous questions. One of these, called the Tusculan, seems to have devoted the attention of its members exclusively to political topics; while the Speculative, although it imposed no restrictions on the range of inquiry, was of a more philosophical character. William Taylor was a member of both, and it is difficult to say whether he distinguished himself most by his ingenuity in debate, by the novelty of the information which he brought to bear on every point, or by the lively sallies of imagination, which at once amused and excited his hearers. The papers read by himself embraced an infinite variety of subjects, from the theory of the earth, then unillumined by the disclosures of modern geologists, to the most elaborate and refined productions of its rational tenants; and he was seldom at a loss to place on new ground or in a fresh light the matter of discussion introduced by others. Writers of every tongue, studied by him with observant curiosity, stored

his retentive memory with materials, ready to be applied on every occasion, moulded by his Promethean talent into the most animated and alluring forms. As a speaker and as a converser, he was eminently characterized by a constant flow of brilliant ideas, by a rapid succession of striking images, and by a never-failing copiousness of words, often quaint, but always correct. His German studies made him an early advocate for preferring the Gothic division of our vocabulary; but precision was invariably his object; to obtain which he never scrupled to have recourse to words of Greek or Latin origin, to revive the obsolete, or coin the new, if he held them to be more etymologically and powerfully expressive than any which our current dialect supplied. Thus prepared, he would always take up whatever question was proposed at these meetings. Connecting with it some fact gathered from his recent reading, he would pour around it the stores of a learning almost peculiarly his own; then soaring into the highest and brightest regions of fancy, he would sport in them as if they were his native realms, still retaining his hold on things below by a delicate thread of most exquisite sophistry, which lengthened as he rose, and by means of which he drew himself down again to earth, amidst the plaudits, if not always to the conviction, of his

delighted hearers*. The connections, circumstances and habits in which William Taylor was thus placed, confirmed day after day the bias which his mind had early acquired towards literary pursuits; and they tended more particularly to give him a decided distaste for that mercantile employment, for which it had been the object of his education to prepare him. About this time the troubles of the French Revolution threatened to disturb the commercial relations of the Continent. The consequent decline of the Norwich trade furnished a powerful argument of which he availed himself to persuade his father to concur with him in withdrawing their capital from operations that appeared likely to become both irksome and hazardous. Nor is it improbable that his mother's loss of sight, which affliction befell her about this pe-

* A similar society was formed at Yarmouth, under the auspices of Dr. Aikin, at which William Taylor also occasionally attended. The Rev. Thomas Compton has given the following description of these visits. "We were, moreover, sometimes gratified by the presence of our literary friends from Norwich. I have there repeatedly listened to the mild and persuasive eloquence of the late Dr. Enfield. A gentleman too, still living, who has lately added to his literary fame by a biographical work of high repute (I scarcely need add that I allude to Mr. W. Taylor), would sometimes instruct us by his various and profound knowledge, or amuse us with his ingenious paradoxes."—*Notes on Lord Chedworth's Letters*, No. lxix. p. 142.

riod, enabled him to urge an additional reason for relinquishing engagements, the termination of which would allow him full leisure to pay the filial attentions due to an affectionate parent under so distressing a bereavement. The course which he recommended was pursued. In the year 1791 they dissolved their partnership with Mr. Casenave. Their joint property appeared adequate to afford them the comforts and even the elegances of private life, and they retired from the cares of business to possess and secure to themselves these enjoyments. Still the father was unwilling to abandon altogether his cherished project of making his son an active mercantile man, and endeavoured to prevail upon him to enter into a London bank. To this scheme the young man felt the strongest repugnance, and in a letter which he addressed at this time to his cousin, Mr. Dyson, to whom he was always warmly and confidentially attached, he regretted "that parents should be so willing to sacrifice their children's inclinations to the vanity of launching them into the world with a splendid establishment." This idea, being regarded by him with so much aversion, was therefore no longer entertained; and being thus set at liberty to follow the bent of his own inclinations, William Taylor devoted himself thenceforth exclusively to literature.

CHAPTER III.

1791 to 1796.

MR. TAYLOR'S FIRST LITERARY PRODUCTIONS.

To a cultivated mind, a life of learned leisure affords the highest of all enjoyments; but it is its misfortune to be exempt from those motives to systematically directed exertion, without which we so rarely accomplish any work that confers reputation on ourselves or benefit on others; and hence it is, that in so many instances talents the most brilliant, that were "meant for mankind," are expended for little more than the amusement of their possessors. To this it may be attributed that William Taylor acquired so much less distinction than, with his capabilities of usefulness, he might have achieved. Like his friend, Dr. Sayers, he passed a life of celibacy; and although diminished affluence cast a shade of anxiety over his latter years, still he always enjoyed an independent income adequate to his wants. But the habits of self-complacent occupation, thus induced, were in some measure counteracted by his natural benevolence. He was always ready to impart to others the treasures of his own mind, and stimulate them to

think, inquire and judge for themselves. This desire gave the general tone to his conversation. He had no ambition to make converts to any of his own opinions, or to be the founder of a school, and the oracle of obsequious disciples. Indeed his " esoteric faith " was known only to a few of his most intimate friends. It was not to be collected from the versatility of argument and boldness of paradox in which he so frequently indulged in mixed society. These were designed to rouse the languid, to shake the prejudiced in their fancied security of pre-eminence, and induce them to explore for themselves the way to knowledge and to truth. There are " diners out," who lay in a store for display. So long as his prepared stock of talk holds out, one of these will engross the whole attention of a party, not one of whose other members he will allow to utter an uninterrupted sentence; and when his fund is exhausted, throwing himself on a sofa, he will there doze, till the summons to coffee disturbs his complacent dream of well-mannered and intellectual superiority. William Taylor was not one of this class. He seldom started a subject himself, and never with a preconceived design of enlarging upon it; but he was always ready to converse on those which were introduced by others, or, if he found them willing to keep up the conversation, he was content to smoke his

pipe in silence, and listen with perfect good humour to their discourse.

The customary hospitalities of his father's house had made him habitually a lover of society; and his own pursuits and inclinations led him to select his companions among the talented, the educated and the studious. Such assemblages were frequent at his table; foreigners and strangers of any degree of eminence found a cordial welcome there, and received a favourable impression of the state of social intercourse in Norwich. There are few now remaining who belonged to the Surrey-street circle in its earliest and happiest days: those who can call to mind the rational pleasures of its Attic repasts, will look to them as marking many a bright scene in the track of their past existence. The pen of another Athenæus might have been well employed in describing that even and incessant flow of interesting conversation, enlivened by all that is most sparkling in wit and most instructive in erudition. Its entertaining anecdotes, its heart-opening good humour, its animated arguments, have passed away without a record, while meaner colloquies have been preserved or invented to amuse the public. None ever departed on those occasions without a feeling of delight mingling with the consciousness of improvement: it was not alone that

they had just been passing some hours most agreeably; but also that they carried away with them some new impressions, some ideas which had never occurred to them before. A spirit was working within them for good; their faculties had been stirred up, thought had been awakened, their memories were replenished with subjects for future inquiry, and their minds were on the stretch for some anticipated revelation of truth.

Young men who evinced any taste for literature were urged forward, and assisted in their pursuits, by his encouraging kindness. His time, his advice, his books, his table, and not unfrequently his purse also, were most liberally at their service; and many who have since distinguished themselves in their respective professions, have been largely indebted to their early acquaintance with William Taylor. Many of his friends were instructed by him in the different languages of which he was master*; and in one instance, his

* "Mr. Taylor kindly undertook to instruct me and another of his friends (Mr. Pitchford), in the German language; and for this purpose attended upon us, for a considerable time, with the punctuality and assiduity of a paid teacher." —*MS. Reminiscences of E. Barron, Esq.*

He also gave regular lessons in Italian to two of the present Gresham Professors, Dr. Henry Southey, and Mr. E. Taylor, the latter a native of Norwich, and the former for some time resident there, as medical pupil to Mr. P. M. Martineau.

generous aid enabled a gentleman, who had been educated for the ministry of the Independent Church, to prosecute successfully his studies for the bar. It was not always that these services were acknowledged in the same spirit in which they were rendered; but he bore such disappointments with unruffled equanimity, nor did the ingratitude of one ever cool the warm current of his benevolence to others.

So also the earliest productions of his pen, the first-fruits of his hours of leisure, were dedicated, not to his own emolument, but to the amusement and gratification of others; for they were either circulated in manuscript, or, if printed, only privately distributed among his friends. That which is entitled to precedence over the rest, is unquestionably his translation of Bürger's celebrated ballad of 'Lenore'; for although

In his Life of Dr. Robert Gooch (Family Library, No. 14. p. 310), Dr. H. Southey adds the following testimony on this point:—"Gooch became acquainted with Mr. William Taylor of Norwich, a man whose name is indissolubly connected with the literature of his age, and who has always delighted in assisting with his counsels, his library, and his purse, young men to whom nature had been more bountiful than fortune, and in whom he thought he could discover promise of future excellence. If he was sometimes mistaken, he was not so in Gooch's case, and theirs was a life-long intimacy." And again (p. 312):—"He returned to Yarmouth, and passed part of the vacation at Norwich with Mr. William Taylor, with whose aid he began the study of German."

it was not published till 1796, when it appeared in the Monthly Magazine for March, and was subsequently printed at Norwich in a thin quarto, still he has himself stated that it was written in 1790*. In the following year Dr. Aikin founded upon it a ballad, which forms part of a collection of poems published by him at that period†; and in 1794 it was read by his sister, Mrs. Barbauld, to a circle of admiring friends at the house of Professor Dugald Stuart in Edinburgh. The impression which it made upon this highly cultivated and most intelligent assembly, who are described as having been "electrified by the tale"—and the consequences which it immediately afterwards produced—have given to William Taylor's translation of 'Lenore' considerable importance in the history of our literature. Not only did it serve to open the way for introducing into this country the works of the most eminent German poets, but it also supplied the spark by which the genius of one of the most remarkable and popular of our modern writers was first kindled. "Are you aware," said Mrs. Barbauld in a letter addressed to William Taylor at a subsequent period, "that *you* made Walter Scott a poet? So he told me, when the other day I had the gratification of meeting him.

* Historic Survey of German Poetry, vol. i. p. 51.

† Aikin's Poems, p. 41.

It was, he says, your ballad of 'Leonora,' and particularly the lines 'Tramp, Tramp,' &c., that inspired him. I do not wonder that any one able to appreciate that translation should speak thus of it. I only want a starling to be at your elbow, to call continually, 'more, more!' or we shall hope you are pursuing those philological inquiries, which in your 'Synonyms' have given us so much pleasure." The circumstances here referred to were afterwards fully explained to the public by Sir Walter Scott himself*; and they have more recently been brought again into notice by Capt. Basil Hall†, and Mr. Lockhart‡. Indeed the narrative of Countess Purgstall, as given in 'Schloss Hainfeld,' has tinged them with hues of romance, scarcely to have been looked for in the real life of the author of Waverley. To repeat facts now so generally known, would be idle and pedantic; but considerable interest must attach to the correspondence which passed between these two young men, on the occasion of this their first contribution to the literature of their country. These letters have fortunately been preserved; the good feeling and good sense that dictated

* Miscellaneous Poems, 1820, p. 3, and Essay on Imitations of the ancient Ballad.

† Schloss Hainfeld; or, a Winter in Styria, p. 333.

‡ Life of Sir Walter Scott, vol. i. p. 235.

them do equal credit to both, and will raise their characters in the estimation of readers, to whom they scarcely could anticipate that this interchange of friendly communications would ever be submitted.

When Walter Scott published his versions of 'Lenore' and 'Der Wilde Jäger' (The Wild Hunter, another of Bürger's ballads), the former under the title of 'William and Helen,' and the latter under that of 'The Chase', he presented a copy to William Taylor, which gave occasion to the following letters.

"*Walter Scott to William Taylor.*

"Edinburgh, 25th November, 1796.

"Sir,

"Though I have not the honour of your acquaintance, I find myself under the necessity of intruding upon you with a double request: it is to entreat that you will do me the favour of accepting a copy of two Ballads, translated from Bürger, with an elegant version of one of which the world has been favoured from your hand; and that you will further have the goodness to pardon a plagiary which I have committed in borrowing two energetic and expressive lines from your translation.

"You will find the theft fully acknowledged to the public in the preface; but I should but ill

satisfy my own feelings, without the present further personal apology to yourself.

"My friend Mr. Cranstoun, brother-in-law to Professor Stuart, who heard your translation read by a lady in manuscript, is the gentleman alluded to in the preface to my Ballads, to whose recollection I am indebted for the two lines which I took the liberty to borrow, as a happy assistance in my own attempt. As I had not at that time seen your translation, I hope the circumstance will prove some apology for my bold effort to bend the bow of Ulysses.

"Long afterwards, when I had the pleasure of reading Leonora, I found it so rich in beauties, that I could not consider a robbery in a very heinous light, where the plunder could so easily be spared, and really could not find in my heart to relinquish what formed so brilliant an ornament to my own little essay. I am very sensible that you are entitled to consider me as a hardened criminal, since I venture at once to claim forgiveness and justify my theft. Still, however, I have the courage to throw myself upon your mercy, and to hope you will pardon the present intrusion, which, had I been in town, you would have been troubled with much earlier.

"I remain respectfully,

"Your most obedient Servant,

"WALTER SCOTT."

"P.S.—The book I have directed to be sent, per the coach, from London, and hope it will come safe. My address is W. S., Advocate, George-square, Edinburgh."

"*William Taylor to Walter Scott**.

"I need not tell you, Sir, with how much eagerness I opened your volume,—with how much glow I followed 'The Chase,'—or with how much alarm I came to 'William and Helen.' Of the latter, I will say nothing; praise might seem hypocrisy,—criticism, envy. The ghost nowhere makes his appearance so well as with you, or his exit so well as with Mr. Spencer. I like very much the recurrence of

'The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,
The flashing pebbles flee.'

But of 'William and Helen' I had resolved to say nothing. Let me return to 'The Chase,' of which the metric stanza style pleases me entirely. Yet I think a few passages written in too elevated a strain for the general spirit of the poem: The age leans too much to the Darwin style. Mr. Pye's 'Lenore' owes its coldness to the adoption of this, and it seems peculiarly incongruous in the ballad, where habit has taught us to expect simplicity.

* This letter, with some trifling inaccuracies, has already appeared in Lockhart's Life of Sir Walter Scott. It forms, however, so material a link in this correspondence, that it cannot with propriety be omitted here.

Among the passages too stately and pompous, I should reckon,

"The mountain echoes startling wake,"

"And for devotion's choral swell
"Exchange the rude discordant noise,"

"Fell famine marks the maddening throng,"

"With wild despair's reverted eye,"

and perhaps one or two more. In the twenty-first stanza, I prefer Bürger's

"Trampling the corn into chaff and dust,"

to your more metaphorical, and therefore, less picturesque,

"Destructive sweep the field along."

In the thirtieth,

"On whirlwind's pinions swiftly borne,"

to me seems less striking than the still dis-apparition of the tumult and bustle. The earth has opened, and he is sinking with his evil genius to the nether world. As he approaches,

"Dumpf rauscht es wie ein fernes Meer."

It should be rendered, therefore, not by

"Save what a distant torrent gave,"

but by some sounds which shall necessarily excite the idea of being *hell-sprung* :—the sound of simmering seas of fire, pinings of goblins damned,or some analogous noise. The forty-seventh stanza is a very great improvement on the original. The profanest blasphemous speeches need not have been softened down ; as, in proportion to the im-

piety of the provocation, increases the poetical probability of the final punishment. I should not have ventured upon these criticisms, if I did not think it required a microscopic eye to make any, and if I did not on the whole consider *The Chase* as a most spirited and beautiful translation.

" I remain (to borrow in another sense a concluding phrase from the Spectator),

" Your constant admirer,

" William Taylor, Jun^r^.

" Norwich, 14th December, 1796."

Walter Scott to William Taylor.

" Dear Sir,

" I delayed acknowledging your favour, of which I have a very high sense, till I should have it in my power to acquaint you that 'Ellenore' had come safely to hand. I have now to return you very many thanks for my old favourite in her new attire, and with all her improvements. I shall imitate, with much more reason, your silence as to my version, and I have much to regret that you had not favoured the public with an attendant to 'Ellenore,' upon which I might have bestowed its due tribute of praise, without the appearance of affectation. To some of your criticisms upon 'The Chase,' I feel much inclined to plead guilty ; for some other passages I have defences to offer, such as they are.

" I do not, for example, think quite so severely

of the Darwinian style, as to deem it utterly inconsistent with the ballad, which, at least to judge from the examples left us by antiquity, admits in some cases of a considerable degree of decoration. Still, however, I do most sincerely agree with you, that this may be very easily overdone, and I am far from asserting that this may not be in some degree my own case; but there is scarcely so nice a line to distinguish, as that which divides true simplicity from flatness and *Sternholdianism* (if I may be allowed to coin the word), and therefore it is not surprising, that in endeavouring to avoid the latter, so young and inexperienced a rhymer as myself should sometimes have deviated also from the former. As for the "*fernes Meer*," I still feel half inclined to believe it an earthly sound, or at least, a supernatural sound, heard upon the surface of the earth; as I rather think Bürger meant that we should believe that the Graf does not descend to the infernal regions, but remains in the wood after the evanishing of the deer, hermit and suite, to abide his doom. Thus, after the appearance of the hell-hounds, the bard proceeds,—

"Er rafft sich auf durch *Wald* und *Feld*,"

which words obviously imply his having continued in the forest, instead of sinking with the altar, &c., as you seem to explain the passage. I ought to apologize for differing with you upon a language, in which you show so much critical

skill, especially as I can by no means boast of my own, although it is considerably increased since I made out these translations. I was at that time but a tyro indeed, and shall upon some future occasion avail myself of your friendly and polite criticisms, to correct some of the many errors into which my ignorance has led me.

"I most sincerely hope that you mean to favour the world with some further specimens of your skill in transfusing into the ancient English ballad the spirit of the German. If you are engaged in any literary researches, in which a correspondence with our northern capital could assist, I should deem myself happy in having an opportunity to show, by any little services in my power, how much I wish to have a claim upon your friendship. From my own stores, I can offer little, but I can boast of some acquaintances among our literary gentlemen here, who are neither few in number nor contemptible in talents. Permit me to return the compliment with which you honoured me, and to assure you how much I am your sincere admirer, as well as respectful humble servant,

"WALTER SCOTT.

"Edinburgh, 22nd January, 1797."

It does not, however, appear that this correspondence, although so abounding in friendly professions, led to any further intercourse between the writers. After an interval of many years,

it will be seen that they again exchanged letters, but in a somewhat altered tone, approaching perhaps too nearly to the coldness of estrangement. 'Lenora,' as it was at first entitled, contributed to spread more widely William Taylor's reputation, both as a German scholar and a powerful writer in his own language. In the six years, during which it remained in manuscript, it became so extensively known, by passing successively from one friend to another, that, besides Walter Scott's, three other imitations of it appeared almost simultaneously in the year 1796, and more were afterwards added. The announcement of these caused it to be inserted in the Monthly Magazine, and afterwards reprinted as a separate publication, under the new title of 'Ellenore,' with many alterations, one of which, in the thirty-third stanza, is acknowledged in the preface to have been suggested by Mr. Spencer's version. This passage was at first written as follows:—

"And where is then thy house and home,
"And where thy bridal bed?"
"'T is narrow, silent, chilly, dark:
"Far hence I rest my head*."

* The following is the original German:—

"Sage an, wo ist dein Kämmerlein?
"Wo? Wie dein Hochzeit-bettchen?"
"Weit, weit von hier—still, kühl, und klein,
"Sechs Bretter und zwey Brettchen."

In the next edition it stands thus:—

"And where is then thy house and home,
"And bridal bed so meet?"
"'T is narrow, silent, chilly, low,
"Six planks, one shrouding sheet."

The last line of which was copied from this corresponding portion of Mr. Spencer's work:

"Say, where the bed and bridal hall?
"What guests our blissful union greet?"
"Low lies the bed, still, cold and small,
"Six dark boards, and one milk-white sheet*."

It would no longer be interesting to compare the relative merits of translations which came out more than forty years ago, although Mr. Lockhart has challenged discussion, by endeavouring to exalt above all others that of Walter Scott. He has not been content with asserting, that "on the whole it seems to be acknowledged by those best entitled to judge, that he deserved the palm†," but he has also inserted a letter written by Miss Cranstoun, afterwards Countess

* Although William Taylor in this instance copied Mr. Spencer's "highly finished translation," he characterized it generally as "bearing to the original the same relation as Pope's Homer to the Iliad." It was published in an expensive form, highly decorated, and embellished with many engravings by eminent artists from designs by Lady Diana Beauclerc. "A party of us at Norwich," says Mr. Barron, in his MS. Reminiscences, "raffled for it; and as William Taylor was the winner, no one of the others felt himself a loser."

† Life of Sir Walter Scott, vol. i. p. 252.

of Purgstall, in which she says, "William Taylor's translation of your ballad is published, and so inferior, that I wonder we could tolerate it*." The warm partiality of friendship in "this romantic creature†" might have been allowed to lavish these encomiums in confidential privacy on her favoured protegé, but the publicity thus given to such disparagement of a work of admitted excellence, is neither correct nor justifiable. Without wishing to detract from others, the letter already quoted from Mrs. Barbauld may be referred to, as opposing to the condemnation thus unscrupulously pronounced the approving testimony of a no less qualified and more experienced judge; and the opinions given by the most eminent critics of that day, both in this country and in Germany, may be cited to confirm and sustain this decision. The Critical Review for 1796‡, while noticing some other versions of 'Lenore,' speaks thus of William Taylor's: "We cannot forbear mentioning, that we have seen, some years ago in private circulation, a translation of this poem, which has lately been inserted in a periodical publication, which is superior to either of these. Though it does not boast of rendering the German line for line, but on the contrary displays some judicious altera-

* Life of Sir Walter Scott, vol. i. p. 241. † Ibid. p. 242.
‡ Vol. xvii. p. 306.

tions, it has transfused in the happiest manner the spirit of the original, and the very march and cadence of the verse; while at the same time it is so idiomatical, as not to suggest the least idea of having been originally written in any other language than English. Those who have read the excellent translation of Goethe's 'Iphigenia in Tauris,' may perhaps guess to whom they owe the obligation." So also the leading Review of Germany, in its brief notice of English publications at that period, ranks this translation far above its competitors, as "the most elegant, and the most successful in imitating the style of the romantic ballads of that country*." That this was not a mere transcript of opinions gathered from the contemporary periodicals of London, but the expression of sentiments entertained by competent judges, may be seen in the following extracts from letters written five years earlier by M. Benzler, whose acquaintance with our language, and admiration of our poets, have been already mentioned.

* Allgemeine Literatur Zeitung, 1796, vol. iv. p. 921. "Die zierlichste und dem Deutschen Romanzenton am glücklichsten nachbildende Uebersetzung, ist von eben der Hand, die Goethes Iphigenia übersetzte, und befindet sich in der neuen mit dem Februare dieses Jahres erst ausgegebenen Monatsschrift, The Monthly Magazine."

"Wernigerode, 10th August, 1791.

"I am very proud that the corrections which I suggested in your translation of the 'Iphigenia' have been deemed worthy of your attention; and the more so, because I feared that they would only excite a smile. May I hope that you will soon do honour to our German Muse, by printing this excellent translation, as well as your 'Lenore?' On the latter, as soon as I have time, I will offer you my critical remarks. Meanwhile, I must say, that in my opinion it is throughout excellent, and that you have hit upon the precise tone for properly transferring this poem into English*."

"Wernigerode, 19th November, 1791.

"At last I send you a few brief observations on your 'Lenore,' but only to prove to you that I have compared it with the original. My criticism is defective, because I am imperfectly ac-

* "Es macht mich sehr stolz, dass Sie meine Vorschläge zu kleinen Aenderungen in Ihrer Uebersetzung der Iphigenia einiger Aufmerksamkeit würdig gefunden haben; um so mehr da ich glaubte dass Sie darüber lächeln würden. Mögten Sie diese treffliche Uebersetzung, zu Ehre der Deutschen Muse, doch bald durch den Druck bekannt machen, so wie auch die Lenore! über welche ich mir eine genaue Kritik noch vorbehalte, da mir jetzt die Zeit dazu fehlt. Nur so viel kann ich Ihnen im voraus sagen, dass sie nach meinem Gefühl im Ganzen vortrefflich ist, und dass Sie den wahren Ton getroffen haben, in welchem das Stück ins Englische übertragen werden musste."

quainted with your ancient dialect, and have not an English ear. To my own, which is German, I dare not trust, because it is often offended even by the productions of your Coryphæi of taste. For example, I cannot endure the irregular recurrence of masculine and feminine rhymes, which is allowed in your verses, but with us is a deadly poetical sin. Of your translation, as a whole, I must again repeat, that in my opinion you have perfectly caught the tone of your ancient ballads, which is not, however, that of Bürger. The latter is manly, concise, full of fire and strength; the former, somewhat feeble and garrulous, but, at the same time, softer and more agreeable. They bear the same relation to each other as a robust, energetic adult, and a quiet, mild old man. Your language has few or no examples resembling ours. Tell me if you intend shortly to print 'Lenore' and 'Iphigenia,' and on what other literary works you are now engaged*."

* "Hier haben Sie endlich einige kleine Anmerkungen zu Ihrer Lenore, bloss zum Beweise, dass ich sie mit dem Original verglichen habe. Zu meiner Kritik fehlt mir tiefere Kenntniss, besonders Ihrer älteren Sprache, und dann ein Englisches Ohr. Mein Deutsches stösst sich an so manchem was auch in Ihren Koryphäen des Geschmackes vorkommt, dass ich ihm wenig traue. So kann ich, unter anderen, die unregelmässige Abwechselung von männlichen und weiblichen Reimen, die Sie sich in Ihren Strophen erlauben, und die bey uns poetische Tod-Sünden sind, nicht ausstehen, und dergleichen. Ueber das Ganze Ihrer Uebersetzung muss ich nochmals

English readers will probably smile to find the force of habit so great, that a German, accustomed from infancy to his own rough gutturals and harsh intonations, should deem the cadences even of our best poets not sufficiently smooth; and that such littlenesses of composition as masculine and feminine rhymes should be made matters of serious comment beyond the pale of the French Parnassus. To us, who have not been trained to consider such irregularities as blemishes, these letters are confirmatory of the opinion given by the 'Allgemeine Literatur Zeitung,' as that of the German public. We have thus seen the attention bestowed both at home and abroad on a work, which we are now told is so inferior as not to be tolerated. This censure would certainly never have been uttered but for the purpose of exalting another translation, which, according to the writer's own confession, attracted so little notice at the time of its publication, that "great part of the edition was condemned to the

wiederholen, dass Sie nach meinem Gefühle den Ton Ihrer alten Balladen Sänger vollkommen getroffen haben. Aber freilich ist dieser Ton nicht der Bürgersche. Dieser ist männlich, gedrungen, voll Feuer und Kraft; jener etwas matt und schwatzhaft, dabei aber weicher und lieblicher. Sie verhalten sich wie ein starker, feuriger Mann, und ein stiller, sanfter Greis. Von jener Art haben Sie wenig oder nichts in Ihrer Sprache. Schreiben Sie mir doch, ob denn Lenore und Iphigenia nicht bald gedruckt erscheinen werden, und was für literarische Arbeiten Sie jetzt beschäftigen."

service of the trunk-maker*." These authorities, however, have not been adduced for the purpose of depreciating any of William Taylor's competitors, but for that of rendering justice where it is due and appears to have been withheld. Walter Scott's translation certainly has considerable merit; but the extent of his obligation to William Taylor has never been fully acknowledged. According to his own statement, he appears to have been indebted to his precursor for no more than the two lines—

> "Tramp, tramp, along the land they rode,
> Splash, splash, along the sea."

But these two lines could not have been introduced into the poem, if he had not reconstructed the story on William Taylor's model. In the original, the scene of the tale is confined to Germany, and there is certainly no trace of the "Splash, splash." To admit this line, which,

* Lockhart's Life of Sir W. Scott, vol. i. p. 264.—The critique on Madame De Stael's L'Allemagne, in the twenty-second volume of the Edinburgh Review, which is generally ascribed to Sir James Mackintosh, has many observations on the reception given in this country to the productions of the most eminent German writers, in the course of which it is stated, at p. 214, that "the versions of Leonora, of Oberon, of Wallenstein, of Nathan, and of Iphigenia in Tauris, are among those which do the most honour to English literature." Of the five translations, thus exalted above the rest, we owe three to William Taylor, one to Mr. Coleridge, and one to Mr. Sotheby.

though not used by Bürger, is in perfect accordance with the spirit of his composition, it was necessary that the spectre and his companion should cross the sea. Hence, therefore, the lover, instead of appearing as a Prussian soldier in the time of the Seven Years' War, is transformed into a crusader, and is represented to have fallen in the Holy Land, and not on the battle-field of Prague. By thus carrying back the supposed date of this fiction from modern times to that distant and dimly seen æra of romantic adventure, a judicious and appropriate change was made in the whole character of the piece. The supernatural loses all its sublimity if brought too near to the clear light of our own days; it belongs only to the shadowy realms of the remote past. Walter Scott felt all the importance of this change, and in adopting it borrowed the two lines, which his friends, overlooking his acknowledgment of the source whence they were taken, regarded as his own, and selected for commendation as the most striking passage in his version*. With them

* This appears in the following extract from a letter addressed to him on this occasion, signed Jo. Ramsay. "Nothing has a finer effect than the repetition of certain words that are echoes to the sense, as much as the celebrated line in Homer about the rolling up and falling down of the stone. *Tramp, Tramp, Splash, Splash,* is to me perfectly new."—Lockhart's Life of Scott, vol. i. p. 253.

also he necessarily copied the measure in which William Taylor had written, which may perhaps, without absolute plagiarism, account for such coincidences of translation as we find in the following stanzas.

TAYLOR.	SCOTT.
XIX.	XIV.
O Mother, Mother, what is bliss? And what the fiendis cell? With him 't is heaven any where, Without my William, hell.	O Mother, Mother, what is bliss? O Mother, what is bale? My William's love was heaven on earth, Without it earth is hell.
XII.	XVII.
O Mother, what I feel within, No sacrament can staye; No sacrament can teche the dead To bear the light of daye.	No sacrament can quench this fire, Or slake this scorching pain: No sacrament can bid the dead Arise and live again.
XVII.	XIX.
Almighty God! O do not judge My poor unhappy child; She knows not what her lips pronounce, Her anguish makes her wild.	O enter not in judgment, Lord, With thy frail child of clay! She knows not what her tongue hath spoke; Impute it not, I pray.
XXII.	XXIII.
She bet her breast and wrung her hands, And rollde her tearless eye, From rise of morn, til the pale stars Again orespred the skye.	She beat her breast, she wrung her hands, Till sun and day were o'er, And through the glimm'ring lattice shone The twinkling of the star.
XXXVII.	XXXVII.
And hurry-skurry off they go, Unheeding wet or dry; And horse and rider snort and blow, And sparkling pebbles fly.	And hurry! hurry! Off they rode, As fast as fast might be; [heels, Spurn'd from the courser's thundering The flashing pebbles flee.

Enough has been said to show how largely Walter Scott was indebted to the earlier trans-

lation, which first directed his attention to this ballad; and although it is not to be supposed that a mind like his could long have remained unaroused by some other kindred spirit, if its powers had not been thus excited, still the merit of having called them forth belongs unquestionably to William Taylor. Nor do the admirers of his genius show much respect for his memory, or much real interest in his fame, when they give currency to the belief, that the first incentive to his mental exertions was an inferior and intolerable composition.

The chief excellence of William Taylor's translations has been adverted to in the extract from the Critical Review, which has just been quoted. They have all the idiomatical characteristics of original English works. His early acquired habit of thinking in whatever language he was using, attended him when in later years he began to interpret the thoughts of others. Instead of adhering rigidly to the peculiar modes of expression employed by them, he presented their ideas in those forms, in which, with a deep insight into their opinions and objects, he considered that they would have given utterance to them, if they had been Englishmen and not foreigners. Hence his translations are free from the awkward stiffness and laboured phraseology so common in writings of that class, and afford

the readers of them juster and clearer notions of the true spirit and design of the originals, than they could derive from more exact and literal versions. Some of the most striking passages in his favourite authors are indeed improved in his hands, and rendered with heightened elegance, perspicuity and force. The judicious and successful use which he made of this licence in the instance of Lenore has been already pointed out*; nor did he execute less skilfully the longer and more important tasks which he undertook about the same time, of translating Lessing's 'Nathan the Wise,' and Goethe's 'Iphigenia in Tauris.' The former of these was printed in 1791, and the latter in 1793, but only for private distribution among his friends. Some years afterwards they were published and subsequently introduced into his Historic 'Survey of German Poetry.' So favourable an impression did these two dramas produce on the few to whom they were at first communicated, that they soon attained to a

* In 1801 Mr. M. G. Lewis republished this poem in his Tales of Wonder (No. lix. vol. ii. p. 469.), with the following prefatory notice :—"This version of Bürger's well-known ballad was published in the Monthly Magazine, and I consider it as a master-piece of translation. Indeed, as far as my opinion goes, the English ballad is, in point of merit, far superior both in spirit and harmony to the German."

publicity, scarcely to have been expected, from the unobtrusive and diffident manner in which they made their earliest appearance in an English dress, and they are still regarded as works of standard excellence. It has already been seen that when, in 1796, 'Lenore' became an object of general attention, the fame of the translator of 'Iphigenia' had spread widely both in this country and in Germany. Previously to the printing of that piece, he submitted it to his friend M. Benzler, who suggested various alterations, nearly the whole of which were adopted. The following extracts from letters written on this subject, will show the estimate formed by Germans of these attempts to naturalize their literature amongst us; they will also afford satisfactory proofs of M. Benzler's competency to judge of English poetry, and an interesting view of the light in which he regarded some of our most popular works of that day.

"Wernigerode, 29 September, 1790.

"At length, my dearest and best of friends, I am enabled to send my promised remarks on your 'Iphigenia.' Accumulated engagements and incessant domestic afflictions have long kept them back. A fortnight ago, I lost my youngest son, the darling of my heart; and I will frankly own, that I should not yet have discharged my debt,

had I not found that the longer I delayed it, the more oppressively it weighed upon my mind. I have therefore stolen a few days from my other engagements and devoted them to your translation, which I have compared word for word with the original. The excellence of your work has made this a pleasure to me, and the employment would have been still more delightful, if I could have brought to it a mind more at ease. You have perfectly understood the original throughout, even in the most difficult passages, and have penetrated deeply into the author's spirit, which you have infused into your transcript, without a servile adherence to the text. Some fine touches have indeed escaped your notice, which I attribute, not to your want of feeling or of ability to detect them, but to the different natures of our languages. On the other hand, you have supplied beauties to the original, of which it has no reason to be ashamed. You will find my criticisms on a separate sheet among the books which I have transmitted to you. Some of my strictures, and more particularly my proposed emendations, will no doubt make you smile; but you will give me credit for meaning well. I trust that, after careful revision, you will soon submit this work to your countrymen; you will thereby do honour to our literature, and afford a treat to every lover of beautiful simplicity, and pure unpretending

grandeur. But you must not rest here; you must go on assiduously in transplanting to British ground the master-pieces of our literature, and teach the better portion of your countrymen to admire our Lessings, our Wielands and our Herders, in translations worthy of their fame*."

* " Endlich, mein theuerster bester Freund, ist mir's möglich geworden, mein Ihnen gethanes Versprechen, in Ansehung Ihrer Ifigenia, zu erfüllen. Meine immer fortdauernden überhäuften Geschäfte und unaufhörliche häusliche Leiden, denen endlich heute vor 14 Tagen der Tod meines jüngsten Sohnes, des Lieblings meines Herzens, die Krone aufsetzte, machten mir's bisher unmöglich; und es würde wohl noch nicht geschehen, wenn nicht meine Schuld, je länger ich sie abzutragen verschob, mich desto stärker gedrückt hätte. Also stahl ich endlich meinen Geschäften einige Tage, und widmete sie Ihrer Uebersetzung, die ich Wort für Wort mit dem Original verglichen habe, eine Beschäftigung, die mir wegen der Vortrefflichkeit Ihrer Arbeit sehr viel Vergnügen machte, und mir noch mehr gemacht haben würde, wenn ich sie mit freierem Geiste hätte vornehmen können. Sie haben Ihr Original fast durchaus, und selbst in den schwersten Stellen, vollkommen verstanden, und sind tief in den Geist desselben eingedrungen, welchen Sie daher auch, ohne sich sklavisch an den Buchstaben zu binden, in die Kopie übergetragen haben. Mancher einzelner schöne Zug ist Ihnen freilich entwischt; und das lag wohl mehr an der verschiedenen Natur der Sprachen, als an Ihrem Gefühl; aber dagegen haben Sie denn auch wieder dem Original schöne Züge geliehen, deren es sich nicht schämen darf. Meine Bemerkungen über's Einzelne werden Sie auf einem besonderen Blatte finden, welches ich den Büchern, die ich hierbei übersende, beilege. Ueber manche dieser Erinnerungen, und besonders über die vorgeschlagenen Aenderungen, werden Sie wohl lachen; aber immer werden Sie mit meinem guten Willen zufrieden seyn. Mögten Sie doch nun

"Wernigerode, 15 June, 1795.

"I shall not regard your finding it difficult to read and use our written characters, so long as you do not cease to love our language, and prize our literature. That you have not neglected these, I can see clearly, in part from your letter, which, as a German composition, is far more correct than any that I have yet received from you; and in part by your translation of 'Nathan the Wise,' which has rejoiced me exceedingly, and which I find almost throughout very faithful. Had I seen it in manuscript, I should have suggested some trifling corrections, as I did in your 'Iphigenia.' It is now too late. I think I have before informed you with what approbation the latter work was received by our German critics, and you will, no doubt, have found this fully confirmed by such of our Journals as you have read. The copy which you sent me for Goethe, I transmitted immediately to him. You have my best thanks for the interesting publications which I have received from you, especially for the Scotch Ballads

bald (doch nach nochmaliger scharfer Durchsicht) dies Werk Ihrem Publikum schenken! Sie würden dadurch unsrer Literatur Ehre, und manchem Liebhaber reiner, stiller Grösse und schöner Einfalt, Freude machen. Und mögten Sie dann fleissig fortfahren noch andere Meisterwerke unsrer Literatur auf Brittischen Boden zu verpflanzen! Wie manches haben Lessing, Wieland, Herder da nicht geliefert, das in einer würdigen Uebersetzung Ihre bessern Landsleute entzücken müsste."

and Specimens, which contain some magnificent pieces. I infinitely prefer the ' Pleasures of Memory,' to the ' Botanic Garden.' The versification of the latter is indeed excellent; it abounds also in striking images and descriptions, together with other poetical beauties; but it is at the same time full of absurdities, and on the whole appears to me to be a complete failure. The machinery of sylphs, gnomes, &c., is in my opinion not at all adapted to the subject; it contrasts most repulsively with the other parts, especially with the Notes, and produces altogether a most ridiculous effect. The total want of action, in so long a poem, is a great fault. It presents a succession of pictures so tiresome, that the richest ornaments of poetry afford no relief. The author appears to be a man of much learning and liveliness of fancy, but wanting purity of taste and correct judgement. The second part is, however, far superior to the first *."

* " Unsere Schrift mögen Sie immerhin zu lesen und zu schreiben vergessen, wenn Sie nur unsre Sprache und Literatur lieb behalten. Und dass Sie diesen nicht entsagt haben, beweist mir theils Ihr Brief, der viel richtiger und Deutscher geschrieben ist als alle vorhergehenden, theils Ihre Uebersetzung des Nathan, die mir grosse Freude gemacht hat, und die ich fast durchweg sehr treu und richtig finde. Hätte ich diese Arbeit in der Handschrift gesehen, so würde ich meine Zweifel über einige Kleinigkeiten, so wie einst bei der Iphigenia, mitgetheilt haben. Jetzt würde ich damit zu spät kommen. Dass Ihre Iphigenia auch von Deutschen Kunstrichtern mit grossem

The philosophical character and design of the 'Nathan,' and the merit of the other of these dramas, as "the master-piece of Goethe," are fully set forth in the 'Historic Survey of German Poetry*.' In their authors' fatherland, they were popular on the stage; but they have too little variety of action, to suit the theatrical audiences of this country, where they are only adapted to please in the closet as poetical dialogues of a very high order. The tendency of Lessing's poem

Beifall aufgenommen worden, habe ich Ihnen, denke ich, schon geschrieben; auch werden Sie selbst es wohl in Deutschen Journalen gelesen haben. Das mir zugesandte Exemplar für Goethe, habe ich gleich an ihn abgeschickt. Für die übersandten schönen Sachen umarme ich Sie, vorzüglich für die Schottischen Balladen und die *Specimens*, welche herrliche Stücke enthalten. Die *Pleasures of Memory* gefallen mir doch ungleich besser als der *Botanic Garden*, der zwar eine treffliche Versification hat, viele schöne Bilder und Gemählde, und andere poetische Schönheiten, aber auch viele Ungereimtheiten enthält, und mir in der ganzen Idee verunglückt zu seyn scheint. Die Maschinerie von Sylphen, Gnomen etc., passt, meiner Meinung nach, für diesen Gegenstand durchaus nicht, kontrastirt auf die widerlichste Art mit dem übrigen Inhalt, besonders mit den Noten, und macht durchgehends den lächerlichsten Effect. Ein Haupt-Fehler eines so langen Gedichts ist auch der gänzliche Mangel an Handlung. Es ist eine Reihe von Gemählden, deren Langweiligkeit durch allen poetischen Schmuck nicht sehr vermindert wird. Der Verfasser scheint ein Mann von vieler Gelehrsamkeit und von schöner reicher Fantasie, aber ohne ächten Geschmack und richtige Beurtheilungskraft zu seyn. Der zweite Theil ist indess bei weitem besser als der erste."

* Vols. i. p. 248, and iii. p. 389.

to inculcate religious liberality, was calculated to carry with it all William Taylor's warmest sympathies; still, in comparing the two works, the palm of translational excellence seems to be due to the 'Iphigenia.' The more exalted tone of its poetry is perhaps better fitted for transference into another language, than the colloquial ease of the former. The heroine's soliloquy in the third act, commencing,

"Fulfilment, daughter of the Almighty Sire,"

may be cited as a very fine specimen of skilful version; and her animated appeal to Thoas, in the fifth act,

"Has man alone the privilege of daring?" &c.,

while it surpasses the original in energy and pathos, also clothes her generous resolution in language more elegant and concise. The corrections furnished by M. Benzler consist of verbal criticisms, which evince a profound knowledge of both languages, and the talent of discerning with observant skill the minutest niceties of expression in each. William Taylor recognised their justness, by incorporating them, with very few exceptions, in his translation; and it is not improbable that they tended materially to form in him the habit of carefully discriminating the proper forces of synonymous terms.

CHAPTER IV.

1793 to 1799.

MR. TAYLOR'S FIRST ENGAGEMENT WITH THE MONTHLY REVIEW AND MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

THE powers thus manifested by William Taylor were soon to be exerted in another field, where, if less of personal glory attended their display, still their influence was very widely diffused and permanently felt. Periodical works form a popular, and perhaps not the least instructive, portion of our literature. They are eagerly read, and guide the opinions of most of their readers. In some instances they have been nurseries of talent, while in others they have favoured a discursive, and consequently feeble, application of abilities, which, if concentrated on one point, might have achieved a noble and deathless reputation. Amongst the most distinguished of that day, the Monthly Review occupied a prominent place. It had held a long and successful career, under the management of Dr. Griffiths, and its leading articles were for the most part supplied by intelligent and liberal-minded Dissenters. Dr. Enfield, one of the

ministers of the Octagon Chapel at Norwich, was amongst the most eminent of these contributors, and through his agency William Taylor's connection with that publication was first brought about. The *primitiæ artis* of the latter were consecrated on the altar of friendship; the earliest trial of his skill in criticism was made on the 'Disquisitions' of Dr. Sayers, of which work his review, or rather his panegyric, was inserted in the Monthly Review for April 1793*. In the following summer, Dr. Enfield, contemplating an absence of several weeks from Norwich, transferred the books, which had been sent for his perusal and judgement, to William Taylor, who was thus formally introduced to Dr. Griffiths, and brought into direct communication with him. The manner in which he performed the task allotted to him, evinced talents so superior and original, that his future assistance was eagerly invited, and he became from that time a regular, and it may even be said, the principal writer for that periodical. Much of the correspondence to which this connection gave rise has been preserved, but as Dr. Griffiths's letters are for the greater part without date, it is impossible to arrange them in any regular order; and many of them are also too confidentially private, to allow of

* Vol. x. New Series, p. 373.

the entire collection being published. Some occasional extracts will however be found interesting. The following, which mark the commencement of this intercourse, will afford some instruction to the uninitiated, who have not been admitted into the mysterious penetralia of the temple of criticism.

Dr. Griffiths to William Taylor.

"Sir,

"Dr. Enfield having informed me, that you were so good as to undertake at my request a review of Mr. Murphy's translation of Tacitus, I have this day sent you a copy by Marsh's waggon, which I hope you will duly receive. I doubt not, that in reporting the merits of this work, you will do perfect justice both to the author and the public. One thing I have to mention, *entre nous*, that Mr. M. is *one of us*, and that it is a rule in our society for the members to behave with due decorum toward each other, whenever they appear at their own bar as *authors*, out of their own critical province. If a kingdom (like poor France at present) be divided against itself, "how shall that kingdom stand?" Excuse, good Sir, this hint. You will easily at one glance see the propriety of it, as well as of the conduct to which it bears reference. But

I imagine you will find yourself under no temptation to pass any harsh censure on a work that has cost so able a man above twenty years' labour, allowing for professional and occasional literary avocations. Mr. M., I am very sure, will have no objection to any fair and candid criticism, conveyed in the language of urbanity. For myself, however, I hardly know how to pardon his violent attachment to aristocracy, on which account he now takes no part in the political decrees of our society.

"I suppose our worthy friend, Dr. Enfield, is now on his northern tour, which I hope will turn out quite to his satisfaction, and prove not only an agreeable, but, for the sake of his health, a beneficial relaxation from study and the effects of confinement. He mentioned in his last letter that he had turned over to you one or two of the pamphlets which I had lately consigned to him. Should you favour me with your opinion of them, per post, you, I suppose, know how to direct; if in a parcel, please to address to me at Mr. Beckett's, No. 82, Pall Mall. Dr. Enfield gave me reason to expect a parcel from him about this time, but it is not yet arrived. I am happy, Sir, in this occasion of commencing a correspondence with a gentleman of your character and abilities, and shall be very glad to hear from you during our friend's absence. When you have looked a

little into Tacitus, you will perhaps favour me with a line of information respecting the general idea which you may then have formed concerning the merit of the translation and notes. I see with pleasure that I am getting into your debt, and I trust that you will not find me altogether ungrateful for the obligation under which you have laid, Sir,

"Your most humble servant,

"R. GRIFFITHS.

"Turnham Green, June 27th, 1793."

William Taylor to Dr. Griffiths.

"Sir,

"I received your favour of the 27th June, with the copy of Murphy's Tacitus. I have read enough of it to think it a very good one. When my opinion happens not to coincide with your wishes, I shall simply decline transmitting it. To conform, is not in me. I am going to the sea-side, and am afraid it will be many weeks before I can send you a reviewal of that and of the 'Calm Observer's Letters,' which Dr. Enfield asked you to reserve me. I suppose you received the parcel you were expecting from Dr. E., as he did forward one containing articles concerning Hall, Paine, Owen and Barry from me. I am obliged by what you hint of a remu-

neration. I have no objection to accept it. My bookseller's bills may as well be paid by literary labour as by those of the counting-house. But I must decline all recompense, unless I can retain the entire liberty of refusing at any time every book to which I may happen to feel disinclined, or to think myself unequal. By these means we shall both feel at ease. With sensibility to your good opinion, I am, Sir,

" Your obedient servant,

"Norwich, 12 July, 1793." " WILLIAM TAYLOR.

The independent tone of this letter was not a mere feint or arrogant assumption; it was the sincere expression of a fixed principle, firmly enthroned within him, and uniformly maintained with inflexible tenacity, throughout the whole series of his almost innumerable contributions to various periodicals during the space of more than thirty years. This sincerity made his praise valuable and his censure instructive; it licensed the freedom which he used in canvassing every subject that was brought before him; and it drew attention to the ingenious, though sometimes fanciful suggestions, which he hazarded, with a view to explain or illustrate some obscure and debateable point. A mere outline of the numerous articles supplied by his pen for the four principal periodicals with which he was connected, would alone occupy a volume. In his own copies of these works he has distin-

guished the papers furnished by himself; and the number thus pointed out is as follows; viz.—

Monthly Review, from 1793 to 1799 . . . 200,
Critical Review, from 1803 to 1804 61,
The same, during the year 1809. 3,
Annual Review, from 1802 to 1807 361,
Monthly Magazine, from 1796 to 1824. . 764,

and the following have been ascertained by the aid of his correspondence and other evidence; viz.—

Monthly Review, from 1810 to 1824 . . . 350,
Athenæum, from 1807 to 1808 15,

making a total of more than 1750 original papers and translations, in the space of thirty-one years, besides other literary labours in which it will be seen that he engaged during the same period. In the further progress of this memoir extracts will be given from a few of the most striking among these, with a list of the whole, as far as it can be satisfactorily ascertained, in order to show the amazing extent of his researches and the infinite diversity of the information which he collected.

Amongst his earliest communications to the Monthly Review, the most important are those on Barry's Letter to the Society of Arts, Owen's Translation of Llywarch Hen's Heroic Elegies, and Murphy's Tacitus. Custom had not, in those days, authorized a reviewer to place the title of a book at the head of an article, as a

text or pretext to introduce a new pamphlet of his own. He was expected to make the author, and not himself, the most prominent object of attention, to give an epitome of the work which he announced, to scan its merits and defects, and to extract appropriate passages in support of the judgement which he uttered. It is not intended here to pronounce an opinion as to the respective value and utility of these two methods; but merely to state the fact, that such were the approved canons of criticism in William Taylor's time. In conforming to them, however, he took a wider, yet connected range. He was better able than any of his brethren of the craft, to compare the subject of his remarks with the cognate productions of other languages. Availing himself of this advantage, he made his countrymen more familiar with foreign writers, and gave a new tone to our periodical literature, which was afterwards rivalled, but never entirely superseded, by the newer style of the Edinburgh, and its derivative Quarterly Reviews*. In his com-

* William Taylor may justly be regarded as the founder of our present school of reviewing. This distinction has indeed been awarded to him by Mr. Hazlitt, who says in his 'Spirit of the Age' (p. 308), "The style of philosophical criticism, which has been the boast of the Edinburgh Review, was first introduced into the Monthly Review about the year 1796, in a series of articles by Mr. William Taylor of Norwich." It is not to be supposed that his numerous contributions to this, or any other

ments on Murphy's translation of Tacitus, he afforded the earliest example of this, by collating

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periodical, are all of equal importance. Some are of course only brief notices of minor works; but the leading publications in his line were almost invariably submitted to his examination, and whenever the subjects stimulated discussion, his criticisms fully warrant the character bestowed upon them by Mr. Hazlitt. The following are the books reviewed by him for the Monthly, to the end of the year 1796.

1793.—Vol. x.

Sayer's Disquisitions.

Vol. xi.

Currie, on the Causes of the Failures.
Paine, on War and Paper Currency.
Hall's Apology for the Freedom of the Press.
Rodings Wörterbuch der Marine.

Vol. xii.

Owen's Llywarch Hen.
Barry's Letter.
Letters of a Calm Observer.
Murphy's Tacitus.
Martial Character of Nations.

1794.—Vol. xiii.

Murphy's Tacitus (*continued*).
Dance of Death.
Dictionary of Sea-Terms.

Vol. xiv.

Trial of Gerald.
Taylor's Plato.
Buchanan's Highlanders.
Whitehouse's Odes.
Prinsep on the Mocurrery System.

Vol. xv.

Hermann of Unna.
British India analysed.
Pursuits of Literature.
Jansen's Dutch and English Dictionary.

1795.—Vol. xvi.

Sketch of the Debate of October 9th.
Preston's Poetical Works.
Wadstrom on Colonization.
In Morte di Ugo Basseville.
Lally de Tollendal's Strafford.
Girtanners Nachrichten.
Ferrand's Révolution Sociale.

Vol. xvii.

Schiller's Cabal and Love.
Taylor's Sallust on the Gods.
Mickle's Poems.
Owen's Welsh and English Dictionary.
Pownall's Antiquarian Romance.
Mémoires d'un Détenu.

it with the French versions of Brotier and D'Alembert; and the conjecture which he ha-

Plan de Pacification.
Paris pendant 1795.
Réveil de la Raison.

Vol. xviii.

Taylor's Cupid and Psyche.
Pye's Commentary on Aristotle.
Wielands Sämmtliche Werke.
Stolbergs Reise.
Condorcet's Sketch.
Vie de Dumouriez.
Du Gouvernement, des Mœurs, &c.
Nivernois' Vie de Barthélemy.

1796.—Vol. xix.

Wadstrom on Colonization.
Wieland's Works.
Morgenstern's Plato.
Jenison's Fourteen Languages.
D'Ivernois' Assignats.
Mannert's Northern Geography.
Garat's Memoirs of the French Revolution.
Lombard de Langres' School for Children.
Servan's Etat réel de la France.
Herder's Scattered Leaves.

Vol. xx.

Lord Auckland's Speech.
Memoirs of Metastasio.
Herder's Scattered Leaves.
Richard Lion-Heart.
Montjoye's Conspiracy d'Orléans.
Kotzebue's Negro Slaves.
Neubeck's Poems.
Interest of the Prussian Monarch.
Durand's Statistics of Switzerland.
Villotesque's Veillées Philosophiques.
Peltier's Paris.
Vues sur des moyens de Paix.
Tiedeman's Spirit of Speculative Philosophy.
Pursuits of Literature.

Vol. xxi.

Pursuits of Literature.
Wieland's Works.
Texier's Roman Republic.
Tiedeman's Speculative Philosophy.
Campe's Contributions to the German Language.
Girtanner's Revolutionary Characters.
Tressan's Mythology.
D'Ivernois' French Finances.
Constitution of the French Republic.
Diderot's Fatalist.
Racknitz on Arabesques.
Martens on Privateers.
De par toutes les Nations.
Moleville's Reflections.

zarded in that article, that the ancient fable of the Phœnix was an allegory, "under which the learned of Egypt had enveloped the philosophy of comets*," is one of those characteristic traits, which so often imparted a stimulating vivacity both to his conversation and his writings. The following letter, which was evidently written in an early stage of his engagement with the Monthly Review, will show how his services were appreciated by the managers of that publication.

Dr. Griffiths to William Taylor.

"Dear Sir, "Sept. 29th.

"The engagements of the month being over, I sit down to fulfill my promise respecting your letter of August the 17th.

"When the work which has engrossed almost the whole attention of the last fifty years of my life, was planned and fixed for execution, the gratuity for writing was settled generally at a sum, not then deemed altogether puny, and which

* Vol. xii. p. 204. This disposition to theorize has been grossly caricatured in a work, called 'The Clubs of London' (vol. ii. p. 155). A more wanton act of injustice was never committed, for the author had enjoyed frequent opportunities of knowing William Taylor better; he could have delineated more correctly his brilliant abilities, and chosen for exhibition the more amiable side even of his eccentricities.

has ever since ordinarily continued, with *allowed exceptions* in favour of the more difficult branches of the business, *i. e.* such subjects as required more labour, and higher and scarcer qualifications in the labourers. The conductor's rule has accordingly ever since been, to rate every *newcomer* into the connexion at the originally fixed general remuneration, and to continue it till mature experience should point out the claim to some increase of consideration for more than the *ordinary* services. But, by the way, this occasional deviation from the stated rule has proved the most unpleasant part of the managerial office. Even cabinet secrets will out; and it could not be expected, that those labourers in the vineyard, who customarily executed the less difficult branches of the culture, would ever be cordially convinced that *their* merits and importance were inferior to any. Hence it was natural that murmurings should have been excited, as they, once or twice in the course of nearly half a century, have been, but which the proper explanations failed not to remove.

"You, Sir, have gone through your probation; and the manager has been, especially of late, convinced that your abilities and exertions were above the ordinary level and consequence; and, that therefore it might be proper to evince that your contributions merited distinction. Some

difficulty, however, arose on account of the hazard of exciting jealousy in the corps, similar, perhaps, to what happened among the vine-dressers, Matt. chap. xx.

"While this subject was in contemplation, came your blunt letter of August 17th, which at once cut the deliberative conductor off from the merit of *proposing to you* what he wished to do with a good grace, but what would in consequence of that letter be done with an ill one.

"To this plain unvarnished tale it is needless to add many words. It only remains to be said, that your account will in future be stated after the rate of three guineas. Should this alteration meet your approbation and acceptance, I shall remain well contented. As to others of my friends, whose task is of easier accomplishment, I trust they will remain satisfied with 'things as they are.' If objections arise, we must resort for consolation to a list of candidates for the next vacancy, for in the literary harvest there is never any want of reapers. Excuse my abrupt conclusion, being apprehensive of losing the post; I, without ceremony subscribe myself,

"Dear Sir,

"Yours, very sincerely,

"The Conductor, &c. &c."

"P.S. Do accept the proprietor's thanks for your late very obliging and very useful exertions."

Deeply imbued with the love of foreign literature, William Taylor's inclination and acquirements soon indicated the direction in which his pen could be most advantageously employed, and which Dr. Griffiths, with the tact of an experienced editor, did not fail to perceive and turn to account. The appendix to each volume of the Review, of which there were three every year, was wholly devoted to this branch. French and German works furnished the principal materials for these numbers, and by far the greater part of them were assigned to William Taylor. The articles which he prepared for this purpose formed afterwards the ground-work of his 'Historic Survey of German Poetry'. In the following letter, which contains evidence for fixing its own date, the views of the writer are placed in a clear light.

Dr. Griffiths to William Taylor.

"Dear Sir, "Turnham Green, Sept. 20th, 1795.

"This day I enclosed to you in Dr. Enfield's parcel, which goes by Marsh's waggon, the volume of Mannert, which has at last been procured by Mr. Beckett, who obtained the loan of it at a foreign library. Perhaps you do not now want this copy, as your German parcel may have

brought the volume, which you wanted to complete your set. The conclusion of Mannert's article may do very well for the December appendix. Your remark on the long-winded article of the gentleman who reviewed the Political Testament is very just. It is scarcely credible, but very true, that it cost me two days' labour to *abridge* that business; and that I struck out as much as would have extended his remarks eight pages further, at which the gentleman shrugs his shoulders and cries 'Oh!' We have, however, come to a friendly separation. He says, he cannot compress so as to make his remarks please himself; and I tell him, that his prodigious amplification will not suit our plan; so we have '*shook hands*,' as the phrase is. I am glad to add (what perhaps has smoothed the way for our parting so readily), that he has just had a very handsome fortune left him;—so, all is well! A book relating to the French Revolution is in the parcel, and you will probably consign it to the catalogue for November. My reviewing friends always run a great hazard of losing their labour, when they voluntarily, and without previously acquainting the conductor, undertake an unconsigned article; and thus it has happened to you, with regard to the notice which you have sent me of Kant's new publication, of which I

had before received an account, and had actually printed it in the first sheet of the present appendix. Had not this been the case, I should certainly have shown my readiness to oblige you by inserting your paper. When the translation comes out, I suppose I may look to you for the account of it. Possibly you may find some difficulty in making your ideas of the work and of its author perfectly square with those of the reviewer, who has pre-occupied the ground. I believe I am now in possession of copy enough to finish this same appendix, and something over. On this occasion, I must acknowledge that you have, as before, '*stood by me*,' as the phrase goes, most manfully. It seems to me probable that the foreign literature will in a great measure devolve on you, if you dislike it not. I have written this in some hurry, being much engrossed at this juncture by index-making and proof-correcting, all which, being what the people in the dock-yards call *working double-tides*, has rather fatigued "Yours, &c.,

"R. GRIFFITHS."

From this time, till the year 1799, the foreign department of this work was principally confided to William Taylor. Each appendix generally contained twelve, and sometimes sixteen, of his

articles. They are distinguished by an activity of research and acuteness of observation in such various and opposite directions, as to attest at once his industry and his talents. Besides the common topics immediately connected with the politics and literature of France and Germany, we find him equally conversant with the doctrines and history of Platonism*, the antiquities of the Celtic languages†, the mysterious proceedings of the secret tribunals‡, the statistics and trade of India§, and the principles of colonial policy‖. These are only a few of the diversified subjects, illustrated by his remarks, in the course of four volumes; they indicate the wide range of his inquiries and the far-reaching grasp of his mind. Occasionally also Welsh and Dutch publications were brought under his notice. In his review of one of the latter occurs a passage, which is worthy of particular record, as it anticipates a change, which the continually increasing facilities of social intercourse promise to consummate. As the separation of tribes, belonging to the same race and originally using one language, produced the difference of the several dialects now prevailing in countries thus

* See vol. xiv. p. 248. † Ibid. p. 284, and vol. xvii. p. 413.
‡ Vol. xv. p. 21. § Ibid. p. 180.
‖ Vol. xvi. p. 374.

peopled, so their re-approximation by the rapidity of rail-road travelling and steam-navigation, may cause the less important of these dialects to fall into the stronger current of a more copious neighbour. The Flemish is thus already disappearing, and in like manner it is by no means improbable that the Dutch also may blend with the more widely spoken and more signally perpetuated language of Germany. Looking forward to this as an event to be expected in the natural advance of human civilization, William Taylor thus alludes to the advantages by which it would be attended. "It is surely more desirable that the Low Dutch should sink into a provincial jargon, and gradually disappear, than that it should be polished into a classical language. It is already the misfortune of modern Europe to possess too many cultivated dialects. The literati, who would keep pace with the progress of the general mind, must be acquainted with many of them; and the emergence of every new nation into learning and refinement multiplies the elementary toil of each student. It is therefore important that the smallest possible number of leading languages should contain the whole stock of information and amusement; and that inconsiderable districts, such as Holland, Denmark, Piedmont and Wales, should not endeavour to

immortalize their respective phraseology, but contentedly slide into the speech of the larger contiguous nations*."

Such flashes of prophetic speculation, bursting forth from amidst the steadier light of a pervasive intelligence, startled the reading public. That much general attention was excited by his compositions, and that they tended to raise the character of the journal in which they appeared, was shown by the eagerness of the editor to obtain contributions from him. This was sufficiently manifested in the course of their correspondence, and will be established by the following selection and extracts from the letters addressed to him at different periods during this interval.

Dr. Griffiths to William Taylor.

"Dear Sir, "Turnham Green, April 16, 1798.

"I send a few little matters, chiefly for the sake of one or two, which will afford somewhat toward the approaching appendix. I hope you are in good forwardness with your contributions for this tail-piece of our journal. As soon as you have got ready any capital article, that will do to begin with, pray send it. I say *begin*, as we

* Monthly Review, vol. xv. p. 218.

generally appoint some paper of consequence to lead the van. We propose to begin printing as soon as we have matter enough to make out the first sheet. I am quite in the dark as to several of the little foreign matters that are preparing for us in these parts, but I imagine and trust that you will be the largest contributor. I have now sent a little volume on the Life of the late Queen of France; if the book has any merit, I should think it may afford some interesting matter relative to that illustrious and intriguing lady.

"I send also the 'Horæ Biblicæ,' at a venture; if you, on inspection, do not choose to do it, return it unreviewed. Indeed it signifies not much whether we notice it or not, as it is not *on sale*. The author, who has only printed a few for friends, is an eminent conveyancer of Lincoln's Inn—an ingenious man. I have been obliged to him for some friendly assistance in the Monthly Review. Mr. Allardyce's book seems to be of importance, and should appear soon. Yet I wish now to call your attention chiefly toward the appendix, as being of most immediate consequence to myself. It is high time now to come to a conclusion as to what we are to do with your unprinted article on Wieland, which has been sleeping these six months in my desk. Shall I accommodate it, as it is, for immediate

use? or will you send any new matter to incorporate with it, or by way of winding up and finishing the account of the edition? I am sorry that you have made so much of Cottle. It is impossible to print it in one review: I should think there is enough for three articles. Your scheme of giving in the Review a double translation of that long, long extract, appears to me to be very unadvised. If you can prove it to be right, you will at the same time prove that I am totally disqualified in point of taste to be the editor of such a work as the Monthly Review, of which truth you may be sure I shall with difficulty be convinced (whatever the public may be), after having followed the literary plough-tail for very nearly half a century and made my way through so much obstruction and rivalship. But, be the question determined as it may, I am really concerned to think of the great pains that you have bestowed on an article that comes in '*so questionable a shape.*' After all, however, if the matter can be cleverly divided, or otherwise brought into less compass (perhaps by the omission of notes), I do not know but it may be *got in*, as my printer expresses it. I believe the matter is much too good to be omitted altogether; I do not wish that. How to modify and adapt it, is the only question. I shall be sorry if you take any degree of offence at the bluntness of my lan-

guage, whenever on any occasion your ideas and mine may chance to run a little a-tilt at each other; for I really admire your abilities, and highly value your literary assistance. As to matters of taste—*de gustibus, &c.*

"I remain, Dear Sir,

"Most sincerely yours,

"R. GRIFFITHS."

(*Extract.*) "April 30th.

"Yesterday I took the liberty of inclosing to you in Dr. Enfield's parcel, a couple of 12mos, in French, of which I must trouble you to sketch out some little account for the appendix. I am sorry to come thus abruptly upon you, and to allow you so little time; but this is owing to my misfortune, not my fault. These two books are but just landed from Hamburgh, and I could not possibly reserve them till Tuesday. I was in hopes of getting something out of De Boffe's parcel of more importance, but could not; nor do I at this moment know whether these two volumes are worth mentioning or not. You will soon see, on opening a few leaves, and will notice them according to what you think of their merits."

(*Extract.*) "May 3rd.

"I do not love to urge and press on my lite-

rary friends to *work double tides*, but I fear that it will be impossible for you to satisfy my present want of foreign materials within the time limited. I am not however quite sure, that we shall not have articles sufficient for the appendix, exclusive of any addition from the materials herewith sent; but it is the uncertainty that distresses me. It is better to have too much than too little, especially as nothing overplus would be lost. We should only at last postpone the insertion of what might not find room on the present occasion."

Dr. Griffiths to William Taylor.

"Dear Sir, "Turnham Green, May 10th.

"I write to you in fear—*much* fear—of wanting copy to complete the present appendix, having met with a great disappointment from a quarter where I have generally experienced the utmost punctuality, especially with regard to philosophical, chemical and medical articles. Being a professional man, he has just now had a remarkable overflow of practice, which has forced him away from his writing-desk. Some other *baulks* have also occurred. On the whole, I apprehend we shall fall short about a sheet or sixteen pages of our print, or more, in quantity. If you have anything from materials of your own providing

(for I have nothing to send) that will make a proper article, or two or three articles, I would beg of you to sit down immediately, if not too inconvenient to yourself, and do what you can for me. The long article you sent me in September last, relative to Wieland, still lies in my drawer, waiting for your final directions concerning it. I can still continue to receive copy for the appendix for about five days to come; to wait longer would expose me to great inconvenience and hazard, to avoid which I must, in the *dernier ressort*, fill up with domestic literature, or insert the long-protracted translation from Wieland. A propos to Wieland,—a friend of mine, a German, who much admires and somehow distinguishes your articles, wishes that you would review a new poem of great merit by Goethe, entitled 'Herman and Dorothea;' but I believe I did mention this in my last. The same German friend of ours has furnished an article or two for the appendix, which, considering that he is not deeply versed in the English language, are not contemptibly done. He observes, that in our Review, vol. xxiii. p. 576, you mention a Professor who lectures on 'Oberon'; he requests to know if you can recollect who that Professor is, and at what university they are delivered. 'Horæ Biblicæ' is not to be reviewed at present; a new edition of it is to come from the Oxford

press. I am told it has been much noticed. You will much oblige me by a line per return of post, if possible, as I shall be anxious to know what I have to trust to. Meantime, I remain,

" Dear Sir,

" Yours, in dismay and hurry,

" R. GRIFFITHS."

(*Extract.*) " June 25th, 1798.

" In my next parcel you will find your unused copy relative to Wieland's works, and you will see in what way I indulged my own taste and judgement, while I fancied myself well employed at Southend, in fitting those papers for one of our appendixes, which could not be done, according to our then circumstances, without using the compressing engine. As matters turned out, the papers were not wanted, but I hope they are not spoiled for any future occasion. I shall indeed be sorry if I have again incurred your displeasure by the liberties which I then took with the productions of your very ingenious pen."

" Dear Sir, " Turnham Green, August 24th, 1798.

" This day I forwarded to London a parcel, containing, with a few other things, the Nos. of Peltier's Paris for the present year, which will probably afford us, with the aid of your judicious

selections, &c. some (not a few) amusing pages for the next appendix, for which I hope you have already something in preparation. In a few days our printer's men, some of whom are exclusively retained in the service of the Monthly Review, will be crying out, 'Copy, copy for the appendix!' In my present apprehension, I must depend on you for the greatest part of this tail-piece of our journal, for I cannot get so much as a letter from my other contributors to this branch of our concern, who, being professional men, seem to regard our employment as only meant to fill up odd chinks of time, when matters of greater moment are not pressing. This, if I am right in my suggestion, is a defect in our system of management, which calls for reformation. Reviewers should have nothing else to do.

"As for the idea of '*lengthening out*,' from works that are not highly entertaining, merely to fill up in a time of scarcity of materials,—that would be a remedy worse than the disease. When new foreign books are not to be had in numbers sufficient to furnish a desirable variety (our grand object), I would rather have recourse to our domestic literature, as we have sometimes done; and of such articles I have always a pretty good stock in hand, waiting for insertion. This kind of remedy I would certainly prefer to the hazard of giving a heavy and dull appendix, in

consequence of spun-out extracts from 'dulness not our own.' Still, however, I do not object to a long account with curious extracts from a valuable foreign book, provided it be on a subject that will interest the reader and keep him from yawning. I have never heard the Review so much censured for any imperfection, as for some occasional instances of dull articles. Your articles, good Sir, are not here in my view; I recollect no instance of their being chargeable with dulness. I say not this to flatter you. In truth the goddess seems to have fewer votaries in this age, than in days of yore. Absurdities of any kind, and the Smithfield Muse, seem to be infinitely more suitable to the present taste. But whither am I wandering? I have sent you 'Fragmens,' &c., translated by Dumouriez. Is this *ci-devant* hero become a bookseller's garreteer?

"I am, Dear Sir, yours most sincerely,

"R. GRIFFITHS."

There are few, indeed, so disinterested as to over-rate services which are to be remunerated by them. When, therefore, we find Dr. Griffiths, as in these portions of his correspondence, setting so high a value on William Taylor's contributions to the Monthly Review, and taking every opportunity of encouraging him to increase their number, we may fairly infer that the assistance thus sought and commended was of no

ordinary character. The work, however, will speak for itself. He may there be traced by that peculiarity of style, which Sir James Mackintosh called his "Armenian dress," by that originality of thought which spared neither the inherited prejudices nor the newest fallacies of the age, and by that glow of generous sympathy with the wrongs of others, before which the barriers of an intolerant exclusiveness are still gradually giving way. While surveying the productions of an energy thus working in anonymous obscurity, it must ever be a subject of deep regret, that it was not exerted in the erection of a more glorious monument to his own fame. It is true that many of these papers were afterwards collected, to form the three volumes of the 'Historic Survey of German Poetry;' but this, like other similar cases, only served to afford additional proof, that no literary patch-work, however beautiful its separate pieces may be, can ever equal the effect of one entire and splendid design. The unity of plan and accordant blending of the different parts, so essential to a perfect whole, must inevitably be broken by this piece-meal habit of composition. Gibbon's great work would never have been produced by such a mode of writing; and the name of William Taylor might have been as much immortalized as that of Gibbon. It was not however *in him* to "conform" to the

maxim of Dr. Griffiths, that "Reviewers should have nothing else to do;" this pursuit did not wholly absorb his attention, even at those periods when his labours were most active. During the year 1794 he furnished some papers for a weekly publication, called 'The Cabinet,' which was put forth by some of his friends at Norwich, and extended to three volumes. Among these first appeared the translation of one of Gleim's War Songs, which has since been preserved with his other specimens of that poet's compositions*. The two concluding stanzas are somewhat altered from the original, to suit the political feelings of those times.

In the following year he printed a translation of four of Wieland's Dialogues of the Gods, in the preface to which he announced his intention of continuing the series. But the first volume does not appear to have been sufficiently successful to encourage the publication of a second. He prepared, however, most probably at the same time and with this view, five more of these dialogues, which were afterwards introduced among his illustrations of this, his favourite, author's collective works†.

* Historic Survey of German Poetry, vol. i. p. 310.

† Ibid. vol. ii. p. 432. One of these had been previously inserted in the Monthly Review for 1798, vol. xxvii. p. 509. Another translation of them, by a different hand, made its appearance about the same time in the 'Varieties of Literature.'

During this year Dr. Enfield printed for the use of his congregation a volume of hymns, selected from various publications of the same kind, and enriched by many original compositions. Several of these were supplied by William Taylor. In some of them permission was requested to make alterations, which was granted, on condition that his name should not be attached to such as underwent this revision, while it remained prefixed to those in which no change was made. Of the latter, as the collection is not in general circulation, two may with propriety be cited here;—one, as being remarkable for the energetic terseness with which it compresses into a few lines the whole essence of religion; and the other, for the felicity with which it adapts a well-known heathen commendation of a particular virtue to the purposes of Christian instruction.

"God of the Universe! whose hand
Has sown with suns the fields of space,
Round which, obeying Thy command,
The peopled earths fulfill their race,

How vast the region, where Thy will
Existence, form, and order gives,
Pleased the wide cup with joy to fill,
For all that feels, and breathes, and lives!

Lord! while we praise Thee, let us learn
Beneficence to all below;
Those praise Thee best, whose bosoms burn
To spread the gifts from Thee that flow.

So at the awful hour of change
Our souls the bands of death shall tear,
Through the whole starry vast to range,
Thy goodness to admire and share."

"The Lord is just: He made the chain
Which binds together guilt and pain.
The Lord is just: He loves to shed
His blessings where the virtues tread.

Happy the man, who dares be just,
Refusing to betray his trust,
Though interest tempt him to the deed,
Though the seducing passions plead.

Happy the man, who dares be just,
Steadfast when duty says "Thou must,"
Against the tyrant's marking frown,
Or the fond crowd impetuous grown.

Him would the storm-vext ocean's weight,
Or lightning barb'd with instant fate,
Or the last earthquake's awful shock,
Unfearing smite,—God is his rock."

For the groundwork of this sacred descant upon justice, it is scarcely necessary to refer the classical reader to the second and third Odes of the third book of Horace. It has been objected by one of Mr. Taylor's friends, that the "vultus instantis tyranni" of the original is scarcely rendered with sufficient precision by "the tyrant's marking frown." The strict rules of criticism are not however fairly applicable to an attempt, like this, at adapting the most prominent images of an ancient lyric to a modern

theme. In the first stanza there is a considerable departure from the

> . . . . . " Sæpe Diespiter
> Neglectus incesto addidit integrum;"

but it presents to us a more pleasing, and, it may be hoped, a more correct view of the justice of Heaven. This was not in fact intended or designated as a translation, and ought not to be judged as such. Had the source from which it was derived been announced, it may be questioned whether the more rigid members even of the respectable and enlightened society for whose use the collection was designed, to say nothing of the zealots of antagonist sects, would not have been greatly scandalized by the introduction of an Horatian ode into any formulary of religious worship for a Christian church. The excellent pastor who edited the volume did not however scruple to sanction it; and another minister of the same persuasion, the Rev. Rochemont Barbauld, with equal liberality, paid the joint tribute of his own and Mrs. Barbauld's praises of these compositions of their former pupil. The entire letter in which this passage occurs is here subjoined, as a pleasing manifestation of the kindly sentiments which William Taylor's early instructors still continued to entertain towards him in after years; and it may also be proper to ob-

serve, that the gentleman whose recommendation forms its more immediate object, has since, in a much higher station, shown himself fully deserving of the encomiums here bestowed upon him.

The Rev. Rochemont Barbauld to William Taylor.

"Dear Sir, "Hampstead, Oct. 26th, 1795.

"As I understand that Dr. Philips has determined to leave Palgrave, and that the proprietors of the school have been deliberating on the choice of a person to succeed him, and been actually solicited on the occasion, I trust my applying to them through your medium will not be deemed by them premature and impertinent, and that you will excuse my taking the liberty of recurring to your mediation. What indeed can be more natural, than that the first master of that school should, though no longer connected with it, still feel interested in its reputation and prosperity, and therefore in the appointment of a gentleman to fill the place he has himself once occupied? Again, what more proper, than that having a friend well qualified to support the character and promote the welfare of an institution ever dear to his heart, he should be anxious to obtain for him the patronage of one of the eldest

sons of this Alma Mater, of one of her darling children, one whom she has always been proud of, and who has never given her a moment's pain? Yes, dear Sir, you were one of my first eight pupils, and I may truly say, that both whilst you were under my tuition, and ever since, I have rejoiced in you, as well in the child as in the man. Besides, you are, if not one of the proprietors, the son of one of them, one of the first founders of that little seminary of learning, and in writing to you I wish to be considered as addressing him also. The confidence I repose in your good opinion of me persuades me, I need not fear either your mistaking the effusions of sincere regard, drawn forth by the occasion, for a bribe to secure your interest, or your suspecting that even friendship would induce me to recommend the man whom I did not think myself authorized to believe possessed of the qualifications requisite to give full satisfaction. He whom I am thus convinced I may recommend without partiality towards him, with credit to myself, and with justice to the institution, has, I am told, been already mentioned to the proprietors. His name is W * * * *. He is a dissenting minister, and has preached for some time at York, where he now is. He was brought up at the New College at Hackney. Both Mr. Belsham and Mr. Wake-

field, who were his tutors, will, I doubt not, if applied to, give him the character of a diligent student and good scholar; and this, were Dr. Kippis still alive, would, I am sure, from what I have lately heard him say, have been confirmed by him. As to sweetness of temper, gentleness of manners, and propriety of conduct, every one acquainted with the man will readily acknowledge they all belong to him. Of his modesty and integrity I have this opinion, that, did he not think himself equal to the task, he would not come forth as a candidate; and that, were he not in reality fully equal to it, he would be the very last person to imagine he was. I would further observe, that he is an early riser, has formed a habit of close application, and possesses a solid and well-cultivated understanding. Tuition is not an art to which he is a stranger; he has now a few pupils, and he takes pleasure in instilling knowledge into the opening mind. As a minister, his good sense and moderation, together with his seriousness and desire of being useful, would, I dare say, render him very acceptable to the congregation. He has married the eldest daughter of Mr. K * * *, whose wife is sister to Mrs. Aikin. Mrs. W * * * * * is a sensible, agreeable woman, and would, I am convinced, make it her business, both from principle and

from inclination, to attend to the health, comfort and happiness of the young people entrusted to her husband's care. My paper is so nearly filled up, that I have hardly room left to tell you my Lætitia desires to be recalled to your remembrance, and to beg of you to present our affectionate respects to Mr. and Mrs. Taylor, and to say from us to your dear mother, we rejoice to hear from time to time good accounts of her health and spirits, which makes us some amends for not having seen her of so long a while. We return our joint thanks for a publication of yours very lately sent us by Dr. Aikin, as well as for the pleasure we have received from perusing some original hymns in Dr. Enfield's 'Selection.' It seems to us whole years have elapsed since we last enjoyed your company. Pray, when you next come to the great town, do not forget poor Hampstead; and, be assured, it will be conferring a much-valued favour on one, who is, with cordial esteem and affection,

"Dear Sir, sincerely yours,

"Rochemont Barbauld."

In 1796 the Monthly Magazine was first commenced, principally under the auspices of Dr. Aikin, through whom the co-operation of William Taylor was obtained. This assistance was continued to be afforded during the space of twenty-nine years, in an uninterrupted series of

nearly 800 articles, branching out into almost every different walk of literature. It was in this publication that much of his German criticism and many of his best translations first appeared. Here also his ' Synonyms ' were presented in their earliest form, and a variety of philological and scriptural inquiries, of historical and chronological disquisitions, of metaphysical and political dissertations, evincing the great extent of his reading, and combining a mass of materials, which might have been wrought up into works of inestimable value*. It is impossible to follow him closely through so wide a range, but occasional notice will be taken of the more prominent of these compositions, at the periods when they were produced. In the first volume are the following pieces from his pen.

1. A series of three papers on the Jews in England, exhibiting the history and condition of that oppressed people, and holding up to merited reprobation the indignities and injuries which they have suffered.

* In a letter dated the 12th March 1796, Dr. Aikin thus expressed his sense of the importance of William Taylor's services:—"You will have seen the use made of your valuable papers in our first number. As to the others, the learned paper on Chronology, as well as the continuation of the history of the Jews, are now printing. I hope also we shall soon receive a new packet from you; for I assure you, your continued assistance is looked for as one of our best supports."

2. A geological essay on the primæval form of Europe, in which are collected from the best authorities and from the writer's own observation, the physical proofs of a general depression of the level of the ocean in this quarter of the globe; and thence the inference is drawn, that the Baltic was formerly connected with both the White and the Black seas, so that the present continent of Europe consisted in ancient times of a cluster of large islands.

3. Translations of Bürger's 'Lenore,' and 'Des Pfarrers Tochter von Taubenhain:'—another ballad by the same author, to which is here given the title of the 'Lass of Fair Wone,' but afterwards, in his 'Historic Survey of German Poetry*,' called 'The Parson's Daughter.'

4. English Hexameters exemplified. This attempt to adapt our language to the ancient epic rhythm, was the prelude to others of the same kind; particularly in the instance of a celebrated poem, the measure of which its distinguished author acknowledged to be an imitation of William Taylor's model. The passage here selected for this purpose is Ossian's pathetic address to the Sun, at the conclusion of his poem of 'Carthon;' and it is introduced by the following prefatory observations.

"The Germans have adopted a variety of the

* Vol. ii. p. 32.

ancient measures into their poetry with good effect; and indeed their most celebrated epic poem, the 'Messiah,' is written in hexameter verse. They possess too, besides a variety of other pieces, translations from Horace and Anacreon, in which the measures of the originals have been imitated. They have however been obliged, by the scarceness of long vowels and the rifeness of short syllables in their language, to tolerate the frequent substitution of trochees for spondees in their hexameter verse, and they scan, like other modern nations, by emphasis, not by position. The following transversion of a passage from Ossian's 'Carthon' may give an idea of the practicability of such metres in the English language."

The use here made of the term *transversion*, and the subsequent introduction of this fragment in the 'Historic Survey of German Poetry*,' have been held to imply that these hexameters were founded upon Denis's German translation of Ossian in that measure. But, on collating them, it will be seen that they are a very close paraphrase of Macpherson's prose, several of the lines being mere transpositions of his very words; and regarding that as a *version*, the new form in which this portion of it is presented may with strict propriety be called a *transversion*. Although this

* Vol. ii. p. 237.

piece has been already twice before the public, its re-insertion here will afford an opportunity of correcting, by a comparison of some of the passages, the erroneous impression that it was copied from Denis.

"Thou, who roll'st in the firmament, round as the shield of my Fathers,
Whence is thy girdle of glory, O Sun! and thy light everlasting?
Forth thou comest in thy awful beauty*; the stars at thy rising
Haste to their azure pavilions; the moon sinks pale in the waters;
But thou movest alone†; who dareth to wander beside thee?
Oaks of the mountains decay, and the hard rock crumbles asunder;

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* "O Thou, that rollest above, round as the shield of my Fathers! Whence are thy beams? O Sun! thy everlasting light? Thou comest forth in thy awful beauty."—*Macpherson.*
"Du die hier oben daher gehst, und gleichest an Ründe dem Schilde
Meiner Väter! O Sonne! wer gab dir die Strahlen? Woher quillt
Dieses dein ewiges Licht? In majestätische Schönheit Kömmst du von Osten."—*Denis.*
Literally translated:—Thou, who goest yonder above, and in roundness art like to the shield of my Fathers, O Sun! who gave thee thy rays? Whence flows this thy eternal light? In majestic beauty thou comest from the east.

† "But thou thyself movest alone."—*Macpherson.*
"Und du wandelst allein am einsamen Himmel."—*Denis.*
Literally;—And thou walkest alone in the solitary heaven.

Ocean shrinks and again grows* ; lost is the moon from the heavens;
While thou ever remainest the same to rejoice in thy brightness.
Although laden with storms be the wind, loud thunders be rolling,
Lightnings be glaring around,—thou look'st from the clouds in thy beauty,
Laughing the storm†. But, alas! thou shinest in vain upon Ossian.
He no more may behold thy effulgency, whether thy fair locks
Yellowly curl on the clouds of the morning, or red in the west wave
Quivering dip.—Yet thou art, perhaps, like me,—for a season ‡:—
Finite e'en thy years.—Thou, too, shalt be sleeping in midnight,
Deaf to the voice of the morning§. Exult, then, O Sun! in thy vigour.

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* "The Ocean shrinks and grows again."—*Macpherson.*
"Der Ozean bläht sich und sinket."—*Denis.*
Literally:—The ocean swells and sinks.

† "Thou lookest in thy beauty from the clouds and laughest at the storm."—*Macpherson.*

* * * * * * * * "Dann schaust du von Wolken Deiner Schönheit gewiss, verachten dauf Wetter herunter."—*Denis.*
Literally:—Then, assured of thy beauty, thou lookest down from clouds with contempt upon storm.

‡ "But thou art, perhaps, like me,—for a season."—*Macpherson.*
"Doch du bist vielleicht wohl gar mir ähnlich, O Sonne! Auch der Vergänglichkeit Kind."—*Denis.*
Literally:—Yet thou art, perhaps, even like me, O Sun! also the child of decay.

§ "Careless of the voice of the morning."—*Macpherson.*

Dark and unlovely is age, as the glimmering light of the moon-
beams*,
Pale that shine through mists over-rolling the face of the grey
sky,
When on the heath blasts sweep, and the sleet-vext traveller
shivers."

The previous attempts of Sir Philip Sydney and of the anonymous author of 'An Introduction of the Greek and Latin measures into British Poetry,' had failed to excite much attention. William Taylor's effort was made at a more fortunate time. His short specimen, appearing in a popular periodical, attracted considerable notice, especially in Germany, where Klopstock in his 'Messiah,' Bodmer in his 'Deluge' and other poems, Goethe in his 'Herman and Dorothea,' &c., Stolberg in his translation of the Iliad, Voss in that of the Odyssey, and Denis in that of the poems of Ossian, had familiarized the public ear with this revived style of versification. The learned and the imaginative had there united in adopting this daughter of antiquity. They

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* * * * * * "Und nicht mehr hören den Morgen
Wenn er dich ruft."—*Denis.*
(Literally:—And no more hear the morning, when he calls thee.)

* "Age is dark and unlovely; it is like the glimmering light of the moon."—*Macpherson.*

* * * "Das Alter is düster und unhold und gleichet
Blässeren Strahlen des Monds."—*Denis.*
(Literally:—Age is gloomy and unlovely, and is like the paler rays of the moon.)

seemed to consider her as an object of their peculiar care, placed under their exclusive guardianship, and they therefore regarded with a curious, if not a somewhat jealous eye, this offer to naturalize the stranger in another land. Symptoms of such a feeling betrayed themselves in a paper which appeared on this occasion in the 'Teutscher Merkur,' a periodical conducted by Wieland. In the number of that work for October 1796, four months after the publication of William Taylor's 'English Hexameters,' they were commented upon in a lengthened article, the writer of which says: "Hitherto, our language alone had the honour of possessing heroic poems, idylls and elegies in the metres of the ancient Greeks and Romans, and no other modern literature could dispute with us this exclusive possession. The English, in particular, were greatly annoyed by the increasing favour which the ancient metres continued to find with the poets of Germany. They regarded with a too complacent satisfaction their own rhymeless five-foot iambics, called blank verse, in which their Milton and Thomson wrote, and despised every attempt to introduce the measures of antiquity. In this they were probably guided by a secret consciousness of the inapplicability of their language to such a purpose, since from its superabundance of monosyllabic words, it resembles a

heap of sand or pebbles without lime or cement*." On this principle, he condemns the frequent recurrence of such dactyls as "light of the," "face of the," &c., and such spondees as "heath sweep," "sleet-vext," &c. Notwithstanding these defects, he admits that this fragment is superior to the earlier productions of the German poets who first tried this form of composition, and he thinks that the English may in time become as good "forgers of hexameters," as they are critical philosophers†. Still, the whole tone of the arti-

* Teutscher Merkur, No. x. 1796, p. 121.—"Unserer Sprache kam bis jetzt allein der Ruhm zu, Epopäen, Idyllen und Elegieen in den Sylbenmassen der alten Griechen und Römer zu besitzen, und keine der andern kultivirten Sprachen konnte und wollte bis jetzt ihr diesen Alleinbesitz streitig machen. Besonders war es den Engländern ein grosses Aergerniss zu hören, dass die alten Sylbenmasse in Teutschland immer mehr Dichter und Liebhaber auf ihre Seite zögen. Sie blickten mit allgenügsamer Zufriedenheit auf ihre reimfreien fünffüssigen Iamben oder sogenannten 'blank-verses,' in welchen ihr Milton und Thomson gesungen haben, verächtlich auf jeden andern Versuch, alte Sylbenmasse in ihre Sprache einzuführen, und wurden darin allerdings von einem gewissen Gefühl des Unvermögens ihrer Sprache geleitet, die durch eine zahllose Menge einsylbiger Wörter einem Sandhaufen ohne Kalk und Bindemittel gleicht."

† Ibid. p. 129.—"Nimmt man die ersten teutschen Versuche in Hexametern zu dichten, aus dem vorigen Jahrhunderte, so wird man finden, dass diese, wo möglich, noch weit ungeschmeidiger und polternder ausgefallen sind als diese englische Erstlinge. Man darf also durchaus nicht zweifeln, dass die Britten nicht eben so gute Hexameterschmiedte als kritische Philosophen werden können."

cle is more that of jealous rivalry than of liberal emulation; and that William Taylor felt it to be so, is evident, from the manner in which he notices and replies to some parts of it in the Monthly Magazine for May 1797.

In spite of the obloquy here thrown upon our one-syllable words, it may be safely asserted, that the English language is no less capable than the German of admitting the use of hexameter verse, if it should be thought desirable. This indeed has been proved. But it is doubtful, whether the modern dialects, whose intonation is regulated by emphasis and accent, can be correctly modulated to that ancient rhythm, which was constituted wholly by quantity and position. At any rate it could only be effected by the restoration of a prosody as cumbrous and useless as that distinction of genders in inanimate objects, which we have so wisely given to other nations the example of totally discarding. Language, as it advances, tends naturally to simplify its forms; it works itself free from the tortuous inflections, by which it is obstructed in its earlier stages; it rejects the uncouth burdens of barbarism, nor is it likely to resume them, after having once cast them off. That of England is, in these respects, far a-head even of those among its neighbours which derive from the same source as itself; its short prepositions and auxi-

liary verbs impart every shade of thought and will, with a more familiar ease, with readier application and nicer precision, than all the intricate declensions and conjugations of Greek and Latin. Would the sacrifice of these advantages, if it were even possible, be compensated by the revival of an antiquated style of versification? It was a curious experiment on the part of William Taylor to show, that, if we choose, we can write in hexameters as well as the Germans; the undesirableness of its success was probably the cause of his attempt finding no seconder till the year 1820, when the author of Thalaba produced his 'Vision of Judgment.' In the preface to that work, he paid the following well-merited tribute to the talents and character of the friend who had preceded him in attempting this unusual form of composition. "Proofs of the practicability of the hexameter were given about twenty years ago by some translations from the 'Messiah' of Klopstock, which appeared in the Monthly Magazine, and by an eclogue, entitled 'The Showman,' printed in the second volume of the Annual Anthology. These were written by my old friend Mr. William Taylor of Norwich, the translator of Bürger's 'Lenora,' of whom it would be difficult to say, whether he is more deservedly admired by all who know him for the variety of his talents, the richness and ingenuity of his discourse and the liveliness of his fancy,

or loved and esteemed by them for the goodness of his heart." The friendship between Robert Southey and William Taylor did not commence till the year 1798, a period towards which we are now approaching*.

The subjoined note† contains a list of his papers in the next five volumes of the Monthly

* So early as in the year 1800, Mr. Southey had projected, in conjunction with Mr. Coleridge, an epic poem in hexameter verse, of which Mahomet was the intended hero. Some detached portions were actually written, but the work was never completed. The fragment, which, with two other short specimens of the same metre, may be found preserved in the second volume of S. T. Coleridge's 'Poems,' appears to have been designed for the opening passage, and was probably all that the indolence of the writer had allowed him to contribute towards his share of so splendid an undertaking.

† To the Second Volume of the Monthly Magazine, he contributed,—

Songs of the Negroes of Madagascar, translated from the French of the Chevalier De Porny.

A Dialogue of the Gods, in imitation of those written by Wieland.

A Translation of Klopstock's Ode, 'Die Choren,' here called 'Sacred Music,' and afterwards inserted in the 'Historic Survey of German Poetry' (vol. i. p. 257), under the literally-rendered title of 'The Choirs.'

Chronological Remarks on Genesis.

Concerning some Apologists of Hero-Worship.

In the Third Volume, the only authenticated communications from his pen are, Chronological Remarks on the time of Solomon; and the comments on the 'Modern Hexameters' of the 'Teutscher Merkur,' which have been already noticed.

There is also, at page 124, another paper on the subject of Hero-Worship, which, from internal evidence, may be safely ascribed to him.

Magazine, which does not, however, exhibit a complete catalogue of the diversified studies that occupied his attention during the period over which it extends; for in that time (viz. from

For the Fourth Volume, he furnished a Sonnet (p. 134), addressed to Earl Stanhope, and two Chronological Essays on the Book of Ezra and the Times of Daniel.

In the Fifth Volume his articles are more numerous, being—

1. Remarks on a passage in D'Anville, apparently identifying the tract of country which was the Eden of primæval history.

2. An account of the Marquis de Laval, a Marshal of France, the original Blue Beard of fabulous renown, and afterwards converted on the stage into a "three-tailed" Turkish Pacha.

3. On the author of the writings ascribed to Ezekiel.

4. A metrical translation of the third Ode of the third Book of Horace.

5. Remarks on the East and West Aramic Dialects.

6. Life of Klopstock.

7. An account of the Rota Club.

8. A Dialogue, after the manner of Wieland, between Charles the First and Louis the Sixteenth.

9. A Poem on the Abolition of Catholicism, after the French army had taken possession of Rome.

In the Sixth Volume, the following are marked as his productions:

1. Historic doubts respecting Joan of Arc.

2. An inquiry concerning the subject of the Elegy commencing at the 13th verse of the 52nd Chapter of Isaiah.

3. A Biographical Sketch of the Jewish Socrates, Moses Mendelssohn.

4, 5, 6. Three Translations from Goethe, viz. the Monodrama of 'Proserpina,' the Eclogue of the 'Wanderer,' and a ballad called 'The King of the Druses,' since more generally known in this country by Mr. M. G. Lewis's Translation, set to music, under the title of 'The Erl King.' (See Historic Survey, vol. iii. pp. 312, 338, 340.)

1796 to 1798) he also wrote in each of those years from 35 to 40 articles for the Monthly Review*. The latter were indeed only observations prompted by the works of others; while the former were the chosen pursuits and

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7. Plan of a Constitution for a Republic.

8. A Sonnet (p. 284).

9. A Poem on the Battle of Aboukir.

10. An account of the Life and Writings of Gleim, with specimens of his compositions, and among them the War Song, which had previously appeared in the 'Cabinet.' (See p. 148.)

11. On the Runic Sagas, with translations from them.

12. On the Legation of Moses.

* The following is a list of the works reviewed by him from 1797 to 1799.

1797.—Vol. xxii.

Bürger's Ellenore.
Schiller's Fiesco.
Owen's Welsh Dictionary.
Nicolai's Sebaldus Nothanker.
Residence in France.
Montjoye's Robespierre's Conspiracy.
Campaigns of Pichegru.
German Miscellany.
Sesostris.
Wieland's Works.
Bitaubé, Les Bataves.
Herder's Letters on Humanization.
Meiner's Manners of the Romans.
Moser's Political Truths.
Essay on Revolutions.
Malmesbury's Negociation.
Stael's Influence of the Passions.

Vol. xxiii.

Coxe on the Secret Tribunals of Westphalia.
Henriade of Voltaire, translated.
Way's Fabliaux.
Sinclair's Letters.
Walpole's Mysterious Mother.
Eichhorn's Introduction to the Old Testament.
Wick's Book-keeping Reformed.
Lally Tollendal's Defence of the Emigrants.
Barruel's Memoirs.
Desodoard's Histoire de la Révolution.

voluntary labours of his own mind. Still, many of his criticisms exhibit traces of a

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Amours de Clitophone et de Leucippe.
Voyageur à Paris.
Calonne's Finances de la France.
D'Ussière's Cyrus et Milto.
Barrère's Montesquieu.
Wieland's Works, vols. xxi. to xxiii.

Vol. xxiv.

Noble's Memoirs of the Medici.
Iniquity of Banking.
Siebenkees's Bianca Capello.
Œuvres de Nivernois.
Espion de la Révolution.
Laharpe on Helvetius.
La Fayette's Heroide.
Meiner's Biographies.
Freret's Works.
Schlichtegnoll's Necrologie.
Wandering Jew.
Tiedeman's Speculative Philosophy.
Barrère's Pensée du Gouvernement.
Manual of the Theophilanthropists.
Rivarol's Discours Préliminaire.
Delormel's Universal Language.
Mesnière's Pasigraphy.

1798.—Vol. xxv.

Herrenschwand's Political Economy.
Okeley's Pyrology.
Robison's Proofs of a Conspiracy.
Barruel's Memoirs of Jacobinism.
Gillies on Antique Sculpture.
Eichhorn's History of Culture.
Mannert's Geography of the Greeks and Romans.
Wahl's Fore and Middle Asia.
D'Ivernois' French Republic.
Kant's Sublime and Beautiful.

Vol. xxvi.

Voltaire's Henriade.
Latournaye's Rambles in Ireland.
Tenhove's Memoirs of the Medici.
Wallace on the Manufactures of Ireland.
Freemason's Letters to the Abbé Barruel.
Wieland's Works.
Herder's Letters on Humanization.
Meyer's Fragments on Paris.
Peltier's Paris in 1798.
Barlow's North America.
Kotzebue's Brother Maurice.
Olivaria's Nord Littéraire.
Müller's Swiss Confederacy.
Glance at the overthrow of Switzerland,
Kant's Idea of Cosmopolitism.
Dedekind's Dokimion.

more than common interest taken by him in their subjects, and afforded opportunities for those original inquiries in which he delighted. Among the publications of that day, a considerable sensation had been produced by some, which charged the Freemasons and other secret societies in different countries of Europe, with a widely spread and formidable conspiracy for the

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Burch's Bulk and Importance of Hamburgh.
Sotheby's Oberon.

Vol. xxvii.

Butler's Horæ Biblicæ.
Cottle's Eddá.
Murphy's Arminius.
Coinage of Silver.
Burch on Commerce.
Herbert Croft's Dictionary proposed.
Desodoard's History.
Countess of Lichtenau.
Regnier and Trouve's History.
Barruel's Memoirs of Jacobinism.
Barthelemy's Works.
Walckenaer on the Human Species.
Hints concerning the Constitution of Germany.
Peltier's Paris.
Herder's Son of God.
Haussner's Phraseologia Anglo-Germanica.
Duvoisier's Défense de l'Ordre Social.
Rousselin's Life of General Hoche.
Kotzebue's Plays.
Homage d'un Suisse.
Lettre à Dumouriez.

Vol. xxviii.

Barry's Letter to the Dilettanti.
Desodoard's Louis the 15th and 16th.
Texier's Colons de toutes Couleurs.
Antidote au Congrès de Rastadt.
D'Ivernois' Losses of France.
Abrégé de Barruel.
Nemnich's Universal Dictionary.

Vol. xxix.

Kotzebue's Lovers' Vows.
Vocabulary of Accentuation.
Schiller's Don Carlos.
Fouchecour's Translation of Rasselas.
Barruel's Jacobinism.
Application of Ditto.

overthrow of established institutions, and the erection of a new system of social government on their ruins. Professor Robison of Edinburgh put forth an elaborate treatise, entitled, 'Proofs of a Conspiracy against all the Religions and Governments of Europe, carried on in the secret meetings of Freemasons, Illuminati, and Reading Societies;' and the Abbé Barruel, a French emigrant, supported the attack by the four octavo volumes of his 'Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du Jacobinisme.' These works tended to revive the alarm which had been created by the eloquence of Burke and the horrors of the French Revolution, but which was then beginning to subside into the calm of exhaustion. That brain-phantoms, so vapourish as those exhibited by the Scotch Professor and the emigrant priest, should ever have had the power to frighten a nation out of their senses, might now excite a smile, had we not still to deplore the injurious effects of the delusion, in improvements retarded till error has become inveterate and almost irretrievable, and in reforms delayed, till abuses and corruption have insinuated themselves almost inextricably into every accessible department of our polity.

The task of reviewing for the Monthly these extravaganzas of credulity and manifestos of terrorism, was assigned to William Taylor, who, in making his report of them, endeavoured by

argument and by ridicule to dissipate the panic with which they were re-infecting the public mind. After tracing the origin and history of the masonic institution, he contended that its lodges, which Professor Robison had denounced as schools of atheism and anarchy, had on the contrary "operated throughout Europe in behalf of passive credulity in religion, and passive obedience to government"; that they took no part in the English republican revolution; that "it does not appear that Fairfax's preliminary convention of 1647 was a deputation of *aspirants* from the lodges, nor that Harrington's Rota Club of 1659 comprised the *epopts* of their inner mysteries"; that long after the revolution they "persevered in fostering those principles of civil and ecclesiastical tyranny which our ancestors abhorred under the name of *Jacobitism*"; that by their continued hostility to the new dynasty they inspired the house of Hanover with so settled a dislike, that the clergy of the electorate were forbidden to join the order; and that the Jacobite refugees revived in France the fashion of freemasonry, where it was encouraged as "favourable to a Quixotic spirit of allegiance to the prince, and of submission to the church." In concluding this part of his argument, he then asked—"If a corporation so extensive, founded on the most superstitious of delusions, and notorious for at least a century of

abject fealty to the sovereign, has been rendered completely subservient to views of religious and political innovation (and Professor Robison assures us that it has), of what victory over human institutions ought the teachers of opinions to despair?" He not only convicted the Professor of an imperfect knowledge of facts, and of inattention to every part of his subject, but also of having had recourse to the common and low partizan artifice, of imputing to large bodies of men the violent opinions sometimes avowed by individuals. "The collective sentiments and the average will of a party," he justly observed, "ought never to be estimated by the ravings of those extreme fanatics, who pretend to belong to it in order to find protection for their extravagances. The lovers of establishments in this country, and the friends to the ancient order of things, undoubtedly number among them some advocates for despotism and tyranny, for superstition and persecution: is the whole party therefore in a conspiracy to revive the prerogative of Henry the Eighth, and the influence of Pope Hildebrand? The advisers of reform, on the other hand, the friends of innovation, doubtless number among them some writers who apprehend no ultimate inconvenience from the dissolution of government, and the extinction of religion: is the whole party therefore in a conspiracy to perpetuate anarchy and to institute athe-

ism? It were unjust to assert either." These are truths which are equally applicable at the present time, and if more generally borne in mind, they would tend greatly to soften the acerbity of party-spirit, and assuage the violence of political strife.

In his Review of Barruel's Mémoires, William Taylor had necessarily to revert to many of these topics; but he also connected with them much information on the history of the Rosicrucians and Illuminés. His acquaintance with the language and literature of Germany enabled him to detect the Abbé's mistranslations of various passages, and his perversions of the whole drift and design of the writings which he quoted. After an unmerciful exposure of these unfair dexterities, he thus concluded his observations. "The conspiracy of the pretended sophists of anarchy to abolish social order, property and science, is so wholly the work of the Abbé's imagination, that, although he makes France the theatre of its exhibition, he is reduced to seek for its apostles in an outlandish tongue, and a Bavarian cloister, and to supply by ingenious interpretation the lessons which he can nowhere discover. From the want of palpable sectaries and disciples, he is obliged to describe an invisible society and unknown chieftains, as his agents and conspirators. Yet these 'ubiquitarian nullibists' (to borrow the jargon of Henry More),

this cosmopolitan cryptarchy, is co-extensive with the habitable world; and while with one hand it is preparing for Paris and Marseilles the desertion and desolation of Palmyra and Babylon, it is crushing with the other the first-born of thrones, and plucking the diadem from the emperor of Pekin."

The Abbé Barruel was so much nettled by these strictures, that he endeavoured to vindicate himself in the following letter, which he addressed to the Editor of the Monthly Review.

"Monsieur,

"Dans le compte qu'il vous a plu de rendre des second et troisième volumes de mes Mémoires sur le Jacobinisme, je me vois accusé d'avoir étrangement abusé le public sur la doctrine des Illuminés. Pour mettre vos lecteurs à portée d'apprécier cette imputation, voudriez vous bien, Monsieur, insérer dans votre Journal un passage tiré des *Ecrits originaux* de cette secte, avec la traduction que j'en ai faite. Vous en ferez ensuite et la traduction et tous les commentaires qu'il vous plaira d'y ajouter; le public jugera. Le voici, Monsieur, ce passage. Je le copie du second volume de ces Ecrits, seconde partie, pages 80 et 81; ou bien *grade d'épopte* (de prêtre) rédigé par Philon Knigge, page 38. Il s'agit des écoles, ou sociétés secrètes et du grand objet au-

quel la nature les destine. Là dessus le hiérophante illuminé prononce ces paroles :

" ' Diese Mittel sind geheime Weisheits-Schulen ; diese waren vor allzeit die Archive der Natur und der menschlichen Rechte. Durch sie wird der Mensch von seinem Falle sich erholen. Fürsten und Nationen werden ohne Gewaltthätigkeit von der Erde verschwinden. Das Menschen-Geschlecht wird dereinst eine Familie, und die Welt der Aufenthalt vernünftiger Menschen werden. Die Moral allein wird diese Veränderungen unmerkbar herbey führen. Jeder Hausvater wird dereinst, wie vordem Abraham und die Patriarchen, der Priester und der unumschränkte Herr seiner Familie, und die Vernunft das alleinige Gesetzbuch der Menschen seyn. Dieses ist eines unserer grossen Geheimnisse.' Ma traduction de ces paroles, pp. 178 et 179 de mon troisième volume, est celle-ci :

" ' Ces moyens (continue l'oracle illuminé) sont les écoles secrètes de la Philosophie. Ces écoles ont été de tout tems les archives de la nature et des droits de l'homme. Par ces écoles sera un jour réparée la chute du genre humain. Les princes et les nations disparoîtront sans violence de dessus la terre. Le genre humain deviendra une même famille, et la terre ne sera plus que le séjour de l'homme raisonnable. La morale

seule produira insensiblement cette révolution. Il viendra ce jour, ou chaque père sera de nouveau ce que furent Abraham et les patriarches, le prêtre et le souverain absolu de sa famille. La raison alors sera le seul livre des loix, le seul code des hommes. *C'est là un de nos grands mystères.*

" Si vous trouvez, Monsieur, que j'aie mal rendu le sens du texte allemand, traduisez-le vous-même comme bon vous semblera. Je n'en veux pas davantage pour démontrer, que l'objet des mystères des illuminés est de nous ramener par la déstruction de toute société civile, nationale, à ce qu'ils appellent tantôt la vie patriarchale, tantôt la vie nomade, tantôt la vie sauvage. Mais de peur que cette révolution, à produire insensiblement et par la morale seule, ne fusse illusion, passez, je vous prie, à la page 92, même partie des ' Ecrits Originaux,' même discours ; et dans la rédaction de Philon Knigge, pp. 47 et 48 ; là vous lirez en Allemand :—

" ' Habt Ihr Euch auf eine gewisse Zahl durch einen Bund verstärkt, so seyd Ihr sicher, und fangt an mächtig und fürchterlich zu werden. Ihr fangt eben darum an bey den Bösen fürchterlich zu werden. Viele von ihnen um nicht zu unterliegen, werden von selbst gut werden und zu Eurer Fahne übertreten. Nun seyd Ihr stark genug dem noch übrigen Rest die Hände zu

binden, sie zu unterwerfen, und die Bosheit in ihrem Keime zu ersticken.'

" Ma traduction est celle-ci, p. 187. ' Etes-vous devenus nombreux à un certain point? Vous êtes-vous fortifiés par votre union? N'hésitez plus (littéralement, Ayez confiance) : commencez à vous rendre puissans et formidables aux méchans (c'est à dire à tous ceux qui résistent à nos projets). Par cela seul, que vous êtes assez nombreux pour parler de force (et que vous en parlez) plusieurs deviennent bons d'euxmêmes (comme vous) et se rangent sous vos drapeaux. Bientôt vous êtes assez forts pour lier les mains aux autres, pour les subjuguer, et pour étouffer la méchanceté dans son germe.'

" Voilà, Monsieur, de ces textes qu'il faut citer, parcequ'ils mettent le lecteur au fait des choses bien mieux que quelques observations grammaticales, qui peuvent être vraies ou fausses, sans toucher au fond des preuves, et dans lesquelles vous m'opposez vous même un contresens visible.

" A présent, Monsieur, traduisez encore, tout comme vous voudrez, et je me charge avec le texte allemand, de prouver que l'intention des illuminés, devenus assez forts, est de faire leur révolution par tous les moyens de Robespierre. Si les parenthèses purement explicatives vous semblent une erreur, je prens sur moi de les justifier par les 'Ecrits Originaux' ('Original-Schriften').

Car vous avez beau dire. Monsieur, c'est sur ces écrits que j'ai travaillé ; et il y a un moyen très aisé de vous en convaincre. Si vous me faites l'honneur d'accepter l'invitation, je vous les montrerai chez moi, ces écrits originaux, garantis par la déclaration la plus authentique de la cour de Bavière. J'aurois bien d'autres choses à vous dire, Monsieur, sur le jugement qu'il vous a plu de porter d'un ouvrage, après tout, du plus grand intérêt pour les nations. Mais il faut d'abord que je sache, si vous consentez à insérer ma lettre dans votre journal. En ce cas elle seroit suivie d'une réponse précise à vos observations. Il ne s'agit pas ici d'une simple discussion littéraire. J'ai dénoncé une conspiration qui a pour objet la déstruction de toute religion, de toute société civile, de toute propriété : je vous dénonce à present vous même à vous même, comme vous trompant, et comme induisant le public dans une erreur, qui peut avoir les suites les plus fatales pour lui et pour vous même par la sécurité qu'elle inspire.

" Je vous fais peut-être tort, en vous attribuant cet article inséré dans l'appendix au vingt-cinquième volume de votre ' Monthly Review.' Vous avez peut-être été contre votre intention servi par quelque conspirateur illuminé. S'il en est ainsi, qu'il se présente lui-même, ce conjuré ; je me charge de lui montrer combien il abuse de votre confiance, de celle du public ; combien il est in-

digne d'un honnête homme de choisir pour cela votre journal, de recourir en Angleterre à tous ces artifices, dès long-tems dévoilés en Allemagne, d'affecter à Londres des terreurs paniques sur les Jésuites et les Catholiques, comme si les Protestans n'avoient pas le même intérêt que les Catholiques à connoître les illuminés et leurs conspirateurs.

" De toutes les observations de votre rédacteur, il n'y en a qu'une sur laquelle il n'ait pas tous les torts possibles. Je peux avoir traduit peu littéralement cette phrase, ' darum sind Wilde und im höchsten Grade aufgeklärte Menschen vielleicht die einzige freyen.' Je pouvois traduire —' C'est pour cela que les hommes sauvages et éclairés au suprême dégré sont peut-être les seuls libres.' Je consens à traduire—' C'est pour cela que les sauvages et les hommes les plus éclairés sont peut-être les seuls libres.' J'y consens, en me chargeant pourtant de prouver, que pour les illuminés il n'y a d'hommes véritablement éclairés que les sauvages, et ceux qui veulent ramener tout le genre humain à l'état des sauvages.

" Je suis, Monsieur,

" Votre très humble serviteur,

"L'Abbé Barruel."

" Londres, ce 20 Juin, 1798."

" When a philosopher," says Hume*, " has once laid hold of a favourite principle, which

* Essay 18, Vol. i.

perhaps accounts for many natural effects, he extends the same principle over the whole creation, and reduces to it every phænomenon, though by the most violent and absurd reasoning." So also the Abbé Barruel, a philosopher, at least in his own estimation, and imagining that he had discovered the secret spring of all the great political movements of his time, forced every passing event into a proof of his theory, and by his *parenthèses explicatives* strained every expression into an evidence of the conspiracy which he denounced. It is amusing, after the lapse of forty years, to observe the oracular gravity and cool assurance with which the hallucinations of a visionary can for a time be obtruded as existing realities, and the world be terrified by coming dangers, which have no being but in the brain of the seer who predicts them. We now know how chimerical were all his notions, how unfounded were all his alarms; and this experience might be profitably applied, in teaching us to estimate the true value of the injurious misconstructions and evil prognostications with which the charlatans of party are so continually agitating their credulous dupes.

The Abbé's remonstrance, was briefly noticed under the head of 'Correspondence*,' and the question of mistranslation referred to the deci-

* Monthly Review, vol. xxvi. 240.

sion of any persons acquainted with the two languages. Soon afterwards, the fourth volume of the 'Mémoires' was published, with an appendix, in which the author attempted to answer the charges made by the reviewer. In his examination of this volume*, William Taylor ably vindicated the opinion which he had expressed of the former portions of the work, and entered into a masterly defence of the Illuminés, of whom he stated, that the progress of his inquiries had led him to entertain a more favourable opinion than he was at first disposed to form. Speaking of their sect, he said, "Men, eminent for talent, for knowledge, for political weight, and for personal character, have united to forward its designs. Rich merchants, nobles and several sovereigns, have frequented its congregations, and have distinguished its adherents by their favour and its martyrs by their recompenses. Two governments only are yet characterized as its persecutors; the one of them has since prohibited the Iliad, and the other has a popish bishop for its prince. Presumptions, then, are in favour of this sect. A million of persons (the Abbé Barruel states them at that number), all of the educated and many of the opulent classes in society, cannot have associated for purposes of monstrous evil. They expected the approbation of conscience, or the even-

* Vol. xxvii. p. 510.

tual gratitude and patronage of their fellow-citizens. Their collective intentions can neither have been palpably absurd, nor hostile to the probable interests of man. Yet, of this sect the Abbé Barruel perseveres in presenting a most odious picture. All that has been imagined to its disadvantage is amassed by him with unsparing hostility, deformed with stabbing eloquence, and aggravated with uncandid hermeneutical dexterity, in order to conjure up a new goblin of alarm. Of this German ghost, he makes a most terrific scare-crow, by dressing it out in the blood-sprinkled garb of his own country, and by tacking to its train a wholly disconnected catalogue of anecdotes of French villany, French perfidy, French cruelty, and French atrocity."

He then proceeded to show the broad line of distinction between the Illuminés and the philosophers who had prepared the way for the great changes effected in France, and that the former "seem ever to have been of opinion that a popular infidelity would not be favourable to popular morality and to the great interests of mankind." In examining the grounds on which they had been so furiously assailed, he observed that the 'Original-Schriften,' whence the main matter of the Abbé Barruel's denunciations is drawn, were not published by the Court of Munich for nearly two years; but in justification of some

arbitrary measures, which had been ill received by the public, they at length came to light. They are wholly an *ex parte* evidence. They contain papers found on an official search, in the possession of Weishaupt, Zwach, Massenhauser, and other members of the order, who were suspected of illicit practices ; and these documents are invidiously picked, inaccurately printed, and not chronologically arranged, which is probably the effect of design ; a dateless account of an assemblage of the order being inserted after the edict for its abolition, as if to suggest a suspicion of contumacy.

The Swedenborgians having been attacked as allies of this sect, under the designation of *Theosophic Illuminés*, William Taylor made the following strong and conclusive answer to this accusation :—"There are in most countries, which allow any toleration, two diametrically opposite classes of sects. The one of these tends to more religiousness than is established by law ; affects greater industry of observance, and greater scrupulosity of conscience, than fall to the average share of other men ; and willingly lengthens its creed by hyperbolical articles of belief, and willingly amuses its leisure by supererogatory rites of devotion,—a class, which with respect to morals is puritanic, with respect to rites is superstitious, and in regard to doctrines is credulous.

The other and freer class tends to less religion than is claimed by the magistrate; it affects a negligence of observance which avoids the temple, and a robustness of conscience which despises peccadillos; it is continually narrowing its creed towards an almost hair's-breadth tenuity, and curtailing its worship of some (as they deem it) superannuated holiday; comparatively speaking, in morals it is libertine; in ritual, lax; in doctrine, sceptical. To the former of these descriptions of sects some have referred the Swedenborgians, and to the latter the Illuminés. Sects so different are naturally hostile, and ill adapted to coalesce and co-operate. When the Puritans had rebelled against Charles the First of England, his cause was soon espoused by all the libertine sects; and of late, when the libertine sects had in general declared for the French Revolution, they soon repelled and drove into the arms of government the faithful zeal of the Methodists and of the vital Christians. The religious instincts operate in Germany as here. Go among the Puritan sects,—they are alarmed at the dissoluteness of the age, and the growth of infidelity; they seem to expect that the world itself will shortly be consumed with its present inheritors. Go among the libertine sects,—they are alarmed at the prolific breed of fanatical extravagance; they quake at the threatened into-

lerance of sour asceticism ; and they seem to expect the barbarous docility of new Attilas to the designing Leos of triumphant superstition. To confound these antagonistic forces is not the part of judgement, and to describe them as conspiring is to err against probability."

After quoting some other instances of mistranslation, the charge of conspiracy elicited the following ingenious argument:—"An analogous though hostile body-spirit (*esprit de corps*) has, in all Catholic countries at least, distinguished the philosophers and the jesuits—there the rival leaders of heretical and orthodox literature. To the natural operation of this spirit the Abbé Barruel gives the name of *conspiracy*. In his sense of the word, popery was established in England by a conspiracy of Christians, in France by a conspiracy of Non-Christians, and Christianity itself was founded by a conspiracy of apostles and presbyters. The institution of Christianity and the abolition of Popery have nevertheless been eventually useful to mankind. Body-spirit is no doubt an equivocal virtue, yet no sect has ever thriven without it. It is an extension of the principle of fidelity in friendship to a more numerous description of friends. As we applaud the man, who with some sacrifice of impartiality defends the character of his friend when attacked, or rescues him from the weight of impending

poverty, at an expense which he would not bestow on the equal distress of some more useful man, of some celebrated poet or philosopher, personally unknown,—ought we harshly to blame him, who, in proportion to the importance which he attaches to the views of his sect or party, becomes the general panegyrist of its friends and the general antagonist of its foes? English philosophers, as Mr. Burke very justly observed, have never been gregarious. They have consequently never been efficient. They have fallen singly, by the pin-stabs of old women, unlamented. Body-spirit often arises from a benevolent sense of the importance of a cause: but it has still oftener been founded by the chieftains of sects on the vindictive passions of human nature. It has most usually and most powerfully been excited by ascribing it in a high degree to the adversary, which never fails to beget a counter-effort and a spirit of retaliation. This game is now playing with considerable success by the anti-jacobins of England, who are endeavouring to give a paper-currency to the once sterling doctrines of passive obedience to the church and divine authority of the king; they seem to deem public opinion the creature of mechanical agency; and they impute conspiracy against the public constitution and religion to every admirer of Dr. Adam Smith and Mr. Gibbon."

In concluding his vindication of the Illuminés, he observed, "A rare absence of indiscretion appears in general to have fallen to their lot; they seem strongly to have feared whatever was indecorous and reprehensible, and to have been trained never to endanger themselves; it would seem as if they aimed at uniting the mildness of the Christian with the resolution of the hero. We look at these sectaries as at men skating: a sense of their insecurity and danger represses all envy of their occupation, all inclination to join them. Yet the spectator feels obliged by the exhibition of their evolutions, by their exploring so boldly the cracking ice of despotism, by their smoothly skimming on the outside edge of liberality, and maintaining the easy poise of conscious skill in a very slippery career."

The Abbé's recommendation of new restrictions on publication drew forth this spirited apostrophe:—"Denouncer of Vandalism! Thus began those men who, after having published a catalogue of prohibited books, stretched on the funeral pyre a Palearius and a Vanini, plunged a Galileo into the dungeons of the Inquisition, patronized those domestic crusades which laid waste the earliest seats of modern culture, and

——————"roll'd
Mother with infant down the rocks,"

and at length accomplished in France the infer-

nal massacre, called after the name of St. Bartholomew! An awful retribution has been inflicted beneath our eyes!"

The article in which these passages occur attracted considerable notice at the time of its publication. Much of the interest, which then attached to the subject, was of a temporary nature, and has now passed away. The croaking vaticinations of Professor Robison and the Abbé Barruel will now only excite a smile. Still they form a striking passage in the history of the period when they were so solemnly sent abroad; and the occasion which they afforded for the display of William Taylor's talents is a sufficient excuse for the attention bestowed upon them here. In the same Appendix, together with many other foreign works, he also reviewed some of Herder's theological treatises. The character there drawn of these writings is a remarkable specimen of his own peculiar style. It has already been included in his 'Historic Survey of German Poetry*'; but it is one of those beauties which will bear a ten-fold repetition, as an example of the happy manner in which he sometimes softened the severity of criticism by the play of fancy.

"Herder," he says, "may be characterized as the Plato of the Christian world. His blooming and ardent diction, and his graceful imagination,

* Vol. iii. p. 40.

uniformly cling in devout ecstasy about those passages of the sacred writings which are adapted to command our loftiest veneration, or to sympathise with our finest feelings. Yet he employs them rather like the mythological allusions and parabolic instructions of an eloquent moralist, than as lessons of experience or dogmata of revelation. He almost professes to conceal, beneath the enthusiasm of a Wesley, the scepticism of a Hume. He binds his brow, indeed, with the clusters of Engedi, strews along his path the roses of Sharon, and culls the sweetest lilies of the Valley of Tirzah; but he employs them rather as the gift of human than of angelic hands, rather as the luxuries of taste than of faith. With him Magdalena, Salome, and the younger Maria, more resemble the clad Graces pursuing Apollo in the dance, and scattering perfumes in his way,—or the Gopia listening with mingled love and devotion to the hymnings of Krishna, while Cama strains his cany bow and mixes for the nuptial feast his cup of five-fold joy,—than those simple, innocent, pure and holy, but somewhat awful forms, in which we are accustomed to embody the saints of our church. His erudition, classical and oriental, gives a weight, and his almost voluptuously poetical imagery imparts a fascination, to his points of view, which disarm Philosophy of her spear, and Su-

perstition of her shield. He seems inclined to institute a paganized Christianity, and to make the feared gods of the vulgar into the beloved divinities of the cultivated. Had Sir William Jones been the founder of a new sect, he would have taught the religion of Herder."

Contributions such as these could not fail to exalt the reputation of the Monthly Review. Still, circumstances were working to interrupt a connection which was evidently so advantageous to the proprietors of that journal. The health of Dr. Griffiths was fast declining, and his duties as editor were devolving upon his son, who seems not to have regarded William Taylor with the same cordial feelings as had always been manifested by his father, nor to have been impressed with an equal sense of the importance of his services. The origin of this coolness is not very clearly to be traced, but it may be ascribed with great apparent probability to some degree of jealousy, arising from William Taylor's numerous communications to the Monthly Magazine, many of them relating to German literature, in which the elder periodical had hitherto been so pre-eminently distinguished above all its competitors. Piqued by this intrusion upon ground which the managers had been accustomed to consider as exclusively their own, it is likely that the inexperienced successor to the leadership indulged

some splenetic humour, by making alterations in William Taylor's papers, which it was well known would be annoying to the writer. Be this however as it may, the first ostensible cause of disagreement was a remonstrance addressed by him to the editor, on account of some proceedings of this kind. The tone of the following letter contrasts strongly with that which was soon afterwards adopted by the son.

Dr. Griffiths to William Taylor.

"My dear Sir, "June 21st, 1798.

"In the parcel which went hence this morning, you will find a long and formidable complaining letter from Barruel. What you will judge proper to be done with it, I long to know. If you choose that we should descend with him into the arena, I hope the contest will not prove a very long one. As to the time, it cannot take place this month; but it may be acknowledged at the end of the Number for June, with a promise of further notice in the Correspondence for July. Pray, favour me with your opinion on this matter in a post or two.

"As to the concluding part of the article on Barruel, which I dared not print, you will find it in the parcel. I was indeed truly sorry to decline it, the phrases being so well turned.

"You will please to proceed with your review

of my friend Butler's 'Horæ Biblicæ.' He wishes it to be done, being apprehensive that it may be a long time before the Oxford edition comes out. The University press is famous for being worked by snails. Mr. B. is, as you suppose, a Catholic; but he is no bigot—he is a very liberal man.

"Mr. Strahan's corrector only is to blame for the unmerited epithet given to Rayner's translation of Theophrastus. Your copy says, "less elegant and lively"; but the compositor blundered, as you see, but which I happened *not* to see in the *proof*. To correct it now, in any note of errata, will seem invidious. It vexes me.

"Of the books now sent, I beg to have Wallace's 'On the Manufactures of Ireland,' done for July. Can I have a tolerably brief article on that subject by the 8th of the next month? I have no objection to four or five pages. I have some knowledge of the author, who is a very promising young man. A little encouragement may pave the way to future excellence. Meanwhile,

'Be to his faults a little blind,
Be to his merit somewhat kind.'

I say only a *little* blind, not wholly so.

"Am I right in sending to you Murphy's unacted tragedy of Arminius? If you do sit down to it, don't let it be among the last things that

you will have to notice in the above-mentioned parcel, most of which I suppose and mean for the 'Catalogue.' N.B. Don't take much notice of M.'s violent prefatory war against the French.

"I remain, dear Sir,

"Now and always, yours most sincerely,

"R. GRIFFITHS."

After a letter like this, in which so much regret is expressed for a mere inadvertent error of the press, it cannot be imagined that Dr. Griffiths would ever have been cognizant of alterations designedly made in any of the articles written by William Taylor, without at least requesting him to sanction them before they were published. We must therefore conclude, that the ground for complaining of such conduct was afforded without his knowledge and concurrence, and was solely the act of his son. From previous passages in their correspondence it was sufficiently obvious, that this was a point on which William Taylor was more than commonly tenacious. His peculiarities of style were not marks of negligence or affectation; they were the result of an extreme attention to accuracy of expression. In his choice of words he was almost fastidiously careful to use none that were not critically exact to his meaning; and if our existing vocabulary did not furnish such as satisfied his judgement, he

never hesitated to compound or to coin some that would suit his purpose. Novelty, of provincial origin, unless it bear the stamp of established authority, is but coldly received in the metropolitan circles. London is so much the mart of talent, and the resort of genius, that the superiority of its literary advantages makes the rest of the country appear, in this respect, little better than a Galilee, out of which no good thing can come. Hence, when extrinsic merit contends for the prize, the dispensers of popularity are generally slow in admitting its claim, and chary of their applause. Something of this feeling may perhaps also have blended with the jealousy already adverted to, in influencing the view which Mr. G. E. Griffiths took of some of William Taylor's newly-coined terms, and inducing him to discard some by substituting a mere common-place phraseology for them. This was regarded by the latter as a total perversion of his carefully-guarded meaning, and his sensitiveness on this point produced a warm remonstrance, to which he received the following long-winded reply.

G. E. Griffiths to William Taylor.

"Sir,

"Your letter of the 8th January requires some observations, which I have been obliged by pressing business thus long to defer.

"The ideas expressed in it, that we have distinct correctors, and that your MSS. are submitted to a Dr. G. or a Mr. H., or to any other gentleman, are erroneous. No corrector of MSS. is employed out of this house; nor are articles sent out of it for revision to any person, except in occasional instances, such as the one with which you were made acquainted, and which, I suppose, has given birth to your conjecture; viz. the communication of your remarks on the 'Horæ Biblicæ' to Dr. G. Here, on the principle that these remarks were not precisely nor professionally in your line of study, they were shown to a friend and coadjutor, to whose particular province they did belong. The justice and propriety of this principle you then allowed; and, except for this reason, or in order to prevent inconsistency when a former reviewer has written on the same author or subject (as when some late articles respecting Herder were sent to Norwich for revision), or when a new connection has been formed, in which a well-tried confidence must be created before it is reposed,—the MSS. of our friends, after we receive them, are seen only in this house and in that of the printer. The alterations, therefore, of which you complain, have their source only *here*. At the close of this letter I shall advert to those which you have pointed out; but I am both surprized and sorry,

that 'petty alterations' (even granting that they are for the *worse*) should excite 'hot indignation,' though but 'for a day or two,' in the author of the MS. in which they are made; especially when it is considered, that as he is, or ought to be, unknown, his reputation as a writer is not at stake. In such a work as the Monthly Review, the ostensible editor is alone responsible for the style, and the avowed proprietor alone amenable for the sentiments; *his* property and *his* person solely being affected by its success or its failure. Consequently the editor and proprietor *must* have the unlimited power of approving or rejecting that style and that sentiment for which only he, or they, will be answerable. In course, if by error of judgement he should so alter any remark of the reviewer as to render it indefensible, he cannot call on the reviewer to defend it when attacked, but must resign it or support it as well as he can, *suo periculo*. For his own sake, therefore, when any important or dubious objection occurred to him, he would gladly communicate it to the reviewer, whenever that was practicable; but distance of residence, limitation of time, and urgency of business, seldom admit this practicability, most especially in those months of double duty in which an appendix is prepared for publication, and in which the hurry is excessive.

" It is obvious that the style of the Monthly Review should aspire to a sterling purity, alike unalloyed by affectation and undebased by vulgarity; neither swelling into 'laboriously rounded phrases,' nor shuffling in careless sentences; neither shining with studied gorgeousness, nor withering in poverty-stricken periods; neither defying by bold neologisms, nor offending by tasteless obsoletisms;—in a word, that it should exhibit the authorized language of the times, corrected by the acumen of a scholar and refined by the taste of a gentleman. To say that it does not always answer to this description, is only saying that perfection is not attainable; but no habitual or systematic violation of these rules should be tolerated.

" The prevailing objection, Sir, to your style arises from your habit of employing words and forms of construction which are not sanctioned or not current in our language, deriving them both from foreign and native sources. It is indelibly marked, as I once took the liberty of personally observing to you, by the traces of Greek, Latin, French, and German phraseology, and by the creation of new verbs, epithets, compounds, &c., designed indeed to express an idea with peculiar force, and '*coined* (perhaps) *in the fair mint of English analogy*,' but not sanctioned by usage and the *norma scribendi*. I

would beg to refer you to your own observations on Kant's language (Review, Jan. p. 64.) ; though neither would *I* apply to *you* the line there quoted from Voltaire. Often as, I readily avow, I have heard your articles distinguished for the talents which they have manifested, the commendation has invariably been shaded by a censure of their peculiarity of diction, sometimes mildly and sometimes severely expressed. Your MS. also, though remarkable for its neatness, frequently comes from your hands without its requisite punctuation, through many succeeding sentences, or members of sentences. If, therefore, in endeavouring to translate this foreign idiom for the benefit of unlearned readers, to exchange the new for more current coin, and to supply this deficient punctuation, the editor sometimes weakens an expression or mistakes an idea, the fault at least *lies between two persons.* I should offer an opinion, if permitted, that a little habitual attention might lower these prominences of language, and certainly the punctuation might easily be regulated.

" Obscurity of allusion, also, occasionally occurs, sometimes to secret or little known modern events or books, at others to persons or transactions recorded in the classic page. In these cases the common reader is left to complain that he reads what to him requires explanation ; or the

editor must alter, or he must expunge, at the risk of injuring the reviewer's thoughts or expressions.

"Among the errors of the press which you have pointed out, the first, in December Review, where the words *foreigner* and *native* are misplaced, though an evident mistake which should have been corrected by the Editor, is not the fault of the Printer, being so written in the MS., which I have since consulted; and among the enumerated *alterations* of the MS. that of the omission of the words 'deputations of deputations' was an oversight of the Printer, undetected in reading the proof, and not a blundering alteration of the Editor.

"P. 571. l. 22. In MS. 'hopes flagged of establishing,' certainly reads more awkwardly than the alteration, in which I do not perceive how the words *in respect to* are ungrammatical, though *with respect* may be better.

"P. 572. note 2. *Rehabilitated* is not English, and would not have been understood. If it be 'the only right word,' its source should have been indicated and its meaning explained.

"P. 573. l. 25. 'Fault of the generosity,' &c. is not English idiom; neither is

"P. 574. l. 7. 'An arbitrary violence.' We say an *act* of violence, which would have been more precisely allusive than *some*; but still I do not think that the allusion is destroyed.

" P. 574. l. 30. I see no real difference in the meaning. The plural, ' journalists,' will suit the Monthly Reviewer as well as the singular ; but it is ever an improper word for that which is not ' daily,' though it stands in the title of the Monthly Review.

" —— l. 35. It was impossible to conjecture that Willich's name was purposely omitted ; and his book was not sufficiently identified without it.

" P. 576. l. 15. ' *With respect* ' thrice repeated, once altered. A point of taste merely; but perhaps Mr. T. is right.

" —— l. 21. ' as they deem it ' might better have been omitted.

" —— l. 25. ' Some have referred,' cannot look as if the Reviewer ' knew nothing about them,' for he then could not have given the preceding delineation of their tenets ; but I do not maintain the necessity of the alteration.

" P. 517. l. 5 and 4 from the bottom. ' Period coldly marred ' by the words ' *tending towards.*' In MS. ' *pregnant with.*' This epithet seems an unlucky conception, when celibacy and virginity are the subjects to which it is applied. The other period said to be thus ' marred,' in p. 523, is certainly not improved.

" P. 519. The term ' *body-spirit,*' though a good English compound, is not so current as the French phrase, and the insertion of that also

could do no harm. The misprint of '*du*' for '*de*' is unimportant.

"The compliment to Mr. Canning, and the more direct allusion to the Anti-Jacobin Review, &c., were not approved. The exordium of Duvoisier is an instance of the obscurity of allusion already mentioned. Not one in a thousand English readers would have understood it; and it rather tended to ridicule M. De Luc, with whom formerly we were intimate, though politics now separate us. The observations which remain are intelligible, and stand well on their own basis, though the 'cloud-capt' structure, to which they were the 'scaffolding,' is removed. I beg to apologize for the length of this letter, and remain, Sir, "Yours, &c. &c.,

"G. E. G."

"Turnham Green, 16th Feb. 1799."

This lecture on style from an aspirant censor, who showed himself so little gifted with discretion in the government of his own pen, would have fired even a less excitable temperament than that to which it was addressed. It fixed William Taylor's determination to break off his engagement with the Monthly Review, of which he had probably given some intimation, and to which it is not unlikely that the enigmatical sentence at the close of the foregoing letter may

have some reference. That Dr. Griffiths knew but partially what was passing, will be evident from the following letters; and his conciliatory overtures also evince, that, although he could not openly take part against his son, still that he was far from approving that line of conduct which had deprived them of such valuable assistance.

Dr. Griffiths to William Taylor.

" Dear Sir, " Turnham Green, 25th March, 1799.

" As in your note of Feb. 8th to my son, you said you would finish and return the books remaining in your possession, I now beg to know as nearly as you can guess, at what time I may expect them. They are chiefly foreign, and I must begin to look out for the materials of our next appendix, now fast approaching. I have here some more of the Barruel matter—a translation of his last volume, and an ' Application ' of his discoveries, &c., by the translator, who is said to be the Hon. Robert Clifford, a respectable writer. I have frequently heard your observations on Barruel in the last appendix much commended. My son troubled you with a long letter dated Feb. 16th, but I know not whether it was received. I am, Sir,

" Yours, with due regard,

" R. Griffiths."

" Dear Sir, " Turnham Green, 27th March, 1799.

" It is a real satisfaction to me, that you will ' continue the notice of works already begun, or essentially connected with such,' as expressed in your favour of the 27th. Indeed it is my wish, that the current of our literary connexion were altogether returned into its accustomed channel, and that oblivion might wholly banish from our minds and memories every trace of unpleasant altercation between us. I mean to trouble you in a few days with a little parcel, containing some part of what has already accumulated, especially Barruel, for the next appendix. My son is trying to get rid of a settled winter's cold and cough, by exchanging the air of this place for that of London; his health has of late not been good. Have you heard of the new ' Vie de Voltaire ' ?

" I remain, with hand and heart,

" Yours, &c. &c.,

" R. GRIFFITHS."

A short note written on the 7th July 1800, in which this worthy old gentleman stated that he was " just recovered from a tedious illness and was almost blind," seems to have closed the correspondence between him and William Taylor. His letters evince much kindness of heart and suavity of manner; and if they afford no in-

dications of a superior mind, they show that he possessed in an eminent degree those qualities, to which the success of his periodical may be attributed—the ability to discern talent in others, the judgement to employ it in its appropriate line, and the task to manage and keep in good humour the various dispositions and opposite tempers with which he had to deal. William Taylor, however, was too seriously offended by the tone which the son had assumed, to be appeased by the father's well-meant courtesies; he persisted in the resolution which he had announced, and ceased to take any part in their Review. For the Monthly Magazine, however, his labours continued without intermission; indeed they increased after the suspension of his other periodic engagement*; and he found ad-

* The following are the articles which he supplied for this work in 1799.

Vol. VII.

1. On the Income Tax.

2. An Ode on the Consecration of the Colours of a Military Association.

3. A Translation of Klopstock's Ode on his Recovery. (See 'Historic Survey,' vol. i. p. 242.)

4. The Devil in Ban; an Idyl from the German of Voss. (Ib. vol. ii. p. 64.)

5. Theseus; from the German of Stolberg.

Vol. VIII.

1. Hints concerning modern Jesuitism. (A continuation of his Reply to Professor Robison and the Abbé Barruel.)

2. On the Jews.

3. On

ditional employment in his poetical contributions to the 'Annual Anthology,' a work of which he suggested the first idea to Robert Southey, in an early stage of the friendly intercourse about this time established between them.

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3. On Vandals and Vandalism.

4. An Ode in praise of Tea.

5. An Imitation of the Eighth Satire of Juvenal.

6. On Antinomianism.

7. Epigrams; from the German of Lessing. ('Historic Survey,' vol. i. p. 372.)

8. A Translation of Klopstock's Ode to the Lake of Zürich. (Ib. p. 246.)

9. On German Historians.

10. Portfolio of a Man of Letters.

11. An Inscription for a Dissenting Meeting-house in the country.

12. A Riddle on a pair of Spectacles.

13. A Contribution to the Theory of Representation. [This is a translation of part of the decree promulgated in 1789 by the National Assembly of France, with the Notes, already adverted to in an earlier part of this Memoir.]

CHAPTER V.

1798 to 1799.

MR. TAYLOR'S EARLY CORRESPONDENCE WITH ROBERT SOUTHEY.

The literary character of Norwich stood at this time very high. A great loss had befallen its social and public circles through the death of Dr. Enfield, which took place in November 1797. He was a valuable member of the community in which he lived. With more knowledge of the world and practical good sense than are generally possessed by men of studious habits, his amiable manners conciliated all around him, and inspired others with the liberality, of which his own deportment furnished an unvarying example. His works are of the same cast, and have been perhaps more serviceable than the productions even of more brilliant talents and profounder learning, in diffusing just principles and imparting useful acquirements. Such individuals possess a quiet and salutary influence over others, which is scarcely perceived till they are removed. Dr. Enfield had assisted greatly in giving to the social intercourse of Norwich that tone, which, for a time at least, softened and subdued the

harshness of civil and religious discord. He brought together men of opposite opinions, and taught them to discuss with temper and urbanity their points of difference, to think that others may be honest and sincere as well as themselves, and to prefer the advancement of truth to the triumph of party or the display of forensic skill. His death dissolved the charm which thus controlled the fierceness of partizanship. The Speculative Society, which had been one of his most efficient aids, did not long survive him. Aristocrats and democrats, churchmen and dissenters, fell back into their respective ranks, and prejudice and animosity again began to entrench themselves within the pale of faction and the sanctuary of the church. The seeds of literature had not however been sown in barren ground. Names of eminence still remained, which made Norwich an object of attention; and among them that of William Taylor, although not given to general publicity, was well known to men of letters, as that of the first German scholar in the country, and one of the most ingenious and original of the periodical writers of that day. This was the time referred to in the 'Life of Sir James Mackintosh*,' when that distinguished advocate, during his visits to Norwich, found there so much

* Vol. i. p. 147.

gratification in "a small circle of literary friends," among whom Dr. Sayers, William Taylor, Mrs. Opie, and Mrs. John Taylor are particularly enumerated. Mr. Basil Montague, who accompanied his friend on those occasions, says also in a letter inserted in that memoir*, "Norwich was always a haven of rest to us, from the literary society with which that city abounded;" and he mentions "the high-minded, intelligent William Taylor" as one of those whom he best remembered.

Dr. Enfield had engaged to furnish a portion of the General Biography which Dr. Aikin was at that time preparing to publish. In consequence of his death it became necessary to fill his place, and the offer was first made to William Taylor, but not accepted by him. The estimation in which his talents were held, and the opinions entertained of his peculiar mode of writing, may be seen in the following extract from Dr. Aikin's letter to him on this occasion, dated the 25th Nov. 1797.

"The loss of our excellent friend Dr. Enfield must indeed be severely felt by all to whom his society was a frequent gratification, and therefore peculiarly by his Norwich intimates. Though my distance from him precluded much enjoyment from his conversation, yet our epistolary corre-

* Vol. i. p. 165.

spondence was most intimate; and considering what I lose in him as a literary associate, perhaps no one out of his own family will be sensible of a greater void made by his death. The biographical scheme, much as it will suffer from his loss, will not however be abandoned; and various conferences have been held concerning the best mode of filling his place. Probably no one person can wholly succeed to his department, but it must be divided among several. In these discussions your name has been mentioned with interest, as that of one already somewhat connected with the plan, and capable of doing it essential service by extending that connexion. I can say with the utmost sincerity, that with respect to large and accurate views through many of the most important branches of human knowledge, and sagacity in judging of persons and events, I should be at a loss to find an equal to yourself through the whole circle of my acquaintance. Only one objection occurred to Mr. Kearsley and me, towards an attempt on our part to engage your assistance largely, and this I shall state to you with the freedom of a friend, who knows the character to whom he is writing. Your style of writing, being obviously the result of systematic ideas, cannot be unknown to yourself to possess many peculiarities both of words and phraseology, for which I am sure you could

give good reasons, but which it is not in the power of one man to make the public readily acquiesce in. It is necessary to the success of such a projected work as ours, that it should in some measure familiarize itself to all readers, and this can only be done by that kind of middle style, easy, elegant, but not uncommon or *maniéré*, which our deceased friend so admirably possessed, and which I attempt as nearly as I can to imitate. You, I am sure, *could* adopt such a style, for you are able to ascend to energy and splendour of a superior cast; but the question is —*would* you? A previous question indeed is, whether you are inclined to employ your leisure at all in assisting us. But as I hope this might be made not unworthy of your attention, the other question will come to be considered. You will, I trust, ere long give me your full and free ideas on this subject (so interesting to me); and I am sure you will do it without feeling any offence at a liberty on my part which I could not avoid taking, and which is the result of real esteem."

It was at this period likewise that Mr. Robert Southey, then rising into fame, first came into this part of the country. The object of his journey was, to commit the education of his younger brother, now Dr. Henry Southey, to the

care of his friend, the Rev. George Burnett, then recently appointed one of the ministers of the Unitarian Congregation at Yarmouth. William Taylor's near connexion with some of the leading dissenters in that town naturally brought about an introduction between two persons, already known to each other by reputation, and both pursuing the same career with similar tastes, congenial ardour and accordant views. Mr. Southey passed some days at Norwich as William Taylor's guest, and then formed the acquaintance of Dr. Sayers and the other members of that intelligent circle. Soon after his departure he wrote to his newly-acquired friend, and thus commenced a correspondence, which was carried on with unabated activity for many years. They frankly and unreservedly communicated to each other their various opinions and plans, and submitted to mutual criticism and correction many of those productions which afterwards received the meed of public approbation. Their letters bear honourable testimony to the sentiments on which this intercourse was founded. The portions of them selected for insertion in the following pages will not only render William Taylor to some extent his own biographer, but also prove a valuable contribution to the literary history of that period.

Robert Southey to William Taylor.

" Westbury, Tuesday night, July 24, 1798.

" My dear Sir,

" I should long ere this have written to acknowledge the hospitality I found at Norwich, but that I thought the mere formality of a letter of thanks would be as little agreeable to you as to myself. I therefore copy for you an eclogue just written; for two reasons,—as a plea for writing, and because it was suggested by your conversation. What you told me of the German eclogues, revived some almost forgotten plans, and enabled me to correct them. I purpose writing some, which may be called English, as sketching features peculiar to England; not like the one which you read to me of Goethe, which would suit any country with Roman ruins. Like the Germans, I would aim at something of domestic interest. * * * I like it myself, perhaps because it is newly written—perhaps because I drew from the recollection of such a source. If I were near you, I should profit by your opinions and your knowledge; and I should be sorry if a two days' journey should totally cut off my intercourse with one whom I highly respect, and whom, if the age of our acquaintance justified me, I should gladly call friend.

[Here follows a copy of the eclogue, entitled 'The Old Mansion House.']

"My others will be better than this. * * * I know not enough of the German eclogues to say that this is in the same style, for, except what I learnt from you, I only remember one of Gesner's, in a Devon and Cornwall collection of poems, and I have forgotten everything of that, except that it is there. Remember me thankfully to your mother, and to all your friends whose civilities I experienced at Norwich. If you have leisure and not disinclination, it will give me great pleasure to hear from you. God bless you.

"Yours truly,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

William Taylor to Robert Southey.

"Norwich, August 10th, 1798.

"My dear Sir!—that 's too cold. Southey!—that 's too familiar. Friend!—that 's too strong. If however you about know in what vocative case I address you, the formal expression of it matters little. I was glad to hear from you—of you. I had taken care to hear of you through Burnett, and bade him tell you I was very sorry not to have found the 'Prælia Anglorum,' &c. in our City Library. Your eclogue is worthy an enthusiast of the Odyssey; but to all unpublished poetry I hold it a duty to be pitiless, and

shall defer detecting its beauties till it be irrevocably born. Do you like the bad grammar of 'There was a traveller came'—the nursery-story-beginning of 'There was'—or the epic form itself of the introduction, which might as well have worn the dramatic form of the remainder? *e. g.*

Trav. Well, grey-beard, you seem out on parish duty,
Breaking the high-way stones, &c.

"Is there not too much similarity of opinion between the traveller and the old man? Both of them dislike the alterations, and both dislike them with a certain refinement of affection, which is in its place only in the traveller. Many of the speeches are now transferable to either party. The poem is a description complete indeed and fortunate, but broken into dialogue one does not know why. The two characters seem to me to require more contrast, which may be accomplished by giving to them a greater disparity of culture, or to the traveller a modern taste. He might in this case prove to be the new landlord, which would give catastrophe to the piece. If I had Voss's 'Luise' here (it was reviewed I think by the Rev. Mr. Henley in the Critical), I would convince you by some translated extracts how very much in its spirit you compose. You talk of Gesner—he is hardly worth naming—he has little originality and no variety. With him 'tis '*et in Arcadia ego*' for

ever. I had rather escape sometimes into Salvator Rosa's wildernesses, than always lounge in trim shrubberies, peopled with cosset lambs and pinioned nightingales.

" I have just been reading a delightful book, entitled ' A Picture of Christian Philosophy,' by Robert Fellowes. Such a work, and from a clergyman of the establishment, is indeed an omen of better times. The character of Burke is remarkably well given in one of the notes. Those of Rousseau and of Paine are to my thinking not quite so fortunate; that of Jesus is drawn exactly as it should be—in the manner most conducive to its useful operation on public morality, and most consonant with the general design of his proper historians. This is infinitely the best answer to Wilberforce's cant which has yet been produced, but is I fear of too refined an order to operate on the organs of his followers—it is attempting with otr of roses to aromatize the fumes of tobacco. I wished Burnett had written this book—there is something so heartfelt in it.

" *A propos* of Burnett—do you know that he is again medicine mad, and talks of going in October to Edinburgh in good earnest to study physic? As I believe every one of his friends has disadvised the measure in the most eloquent terms, it is no doubt the darling purpose of his soul and unal-

terable. He chooses to stake all he can command upon it. I am sorry for it, both as I shall lose a much-valued neighbour, and as I doubt his eventual success. The indolence which procrastinates application in one department of pursuit will not be stimulated in another to permanent exertion. Without much industry he cannot fetch in the disadvantage of an education otherwise directed. All qualities tend to attain their natural reward. Great excellence does anything —secondary excellence is neglected, and the neglected physician is nowhere an enviable being. He may indeed with a diploma marry to more advantage than in his present line of life, but one does not wish him to speculate *so*. I am idling away my leisure in settling questions of chronology. I have stumbled on the new hypothesis, that the Nebuchadnezzar of Scripture is the Cyrus of Greek history, which annihilates seventy years of received story supposed to pass between them. To compress and squeeze together the annals of Egypt sufficiently, has given me most embarrassment. A second proposition is, that Daniel, the Jew, a favourite of this prince, wrote all those oracles scattered in Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel relative to his enterprises, for the particularization of which they afford ample materials. I shall endeavour

to unite the several investigations in an essay on the life of Cyrus.

" You will observe I followed your steps in reviewing Benyowski and the two plays from Kraner for the Monthly. From a passage in the Critical it seemed to me as if his real history must have resembled the fable of the drama. Can you tell me where to look for such history? The passage in Wadstrom about him described him as attempting the independence of Madagascar—a second good theme for a Gothic drama. I have got to look over for the appendix to the Monthly Review, a three volume history of Switzerland in German, by a man of strong mind and yet dull. The Swiss may have been a bold, and I suppose a free people; but they have always been a stupid people, and their pretended glorious achievements resemble victories won in election riots by the bludgeonmen of rival mayors of Old Sarum. The history of Switzerland appears to me to have only that minute value which is assigned to the history of those petty Italian states that disputed awhile with Florence the prize of culture and magnificence.

" Will it be a sin this tenth of August to transcribe you an attempt at an Ode on the death of Messrs. Shears of Dublin?

" 'T is sweet to view the daylight, sweet to breathe
The wandering air of heaven, where dwell the free
Whom chosen rulers guide
By wise and equal laws.
And to such homes shall courage love to fray,
Athwart the weapon'd slaves of tyranny,
A broad triumphal road.
* * * ye brother souls,
By love yet closer than by nature knit,
For human liberty and human rights
Who in your beauty bled
Beneath the approving eye
Of that great woman, Roland's blameless wife,
Who shared and hallow'd your untimely doom—
Ducos! Fonfrede!
Stoop from the airy halls,
Whence with the martyr'd brave ye love to mark
The generous few by suffering virtue fired—
Your equal rivals greet.
Two brother souls ascend,
Whose grave the tears of Erin long shall wet,
Whose name the kneeling patriot shall invoke,
While on his sword he swears
The oath to freedom dear.
Their friendship must no common grave entomb,
Their monument no tyrant's cringeling rear,
But hers the Muse's hand,
Which dares with throning power
Wrestle the strife of ages, proudly clasp
Whom that oppresses, and engird their brows
With glittering crowns of praise
Wove of unfading beams.
Not yet the great retributress has closed
The book of fate—her unhurl'd lightnings glow,
And on the neck of force
One day shall Justice tread.
The stone-piled towers of feudal violence
Are fallen amid the fields they overawed;

And the free peasant treads
Their scarcely heeded dust.
And these new prison-walls, where mightier wrong
Withers its foes, shall not a nation's wrath
Dash into ruin too,
And storm-winds strow their rack?
Lo! who are you? Unveil'd, of lofty port,
Proud transport smiling in her glistening eye,
A gray-hair'd matron leads
Some pale, angelic form.
On, with calm step, down to the dungeon door—
It creaks—no, not to call you to your doom.
Henry! thy wife is near,
Grasping thy mother's hand,
Who brings a parting blessing—on those lips
Which to thy dying father's pleading eye
Promised to live for you—
Ere her heart breaks.
'Sons, 'twas for this I bore you—die as men,
To whom your father's country and your offspring
Deserved to owe the good
Ye struggled to obtain.
Thy wife, son, cannot speak—she loves thy children;
And in her poverty shall thank her God,
That thou hast boldly dared
Devote them for thy country.
Thou needest, John, thy mother's counsel not.
If the few weeks that, ere we meet, roll by,
Worthy of thee I spend,
Well pleased mine eyes shall close.'"

"Many who read your writings forgive your opinions for the sake of the poetry. You are called on for an opposite indulgence—forgive the poetry for the sake of the sentiments.

"Your very affectionate,

"WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor.

"Hereford, Sept. 5, 1798.

"I thank you for your remarks on the eclogue, and shall profit by them. I am partial to 'There was'—because it is a nursery-tale beginning; but in this case it will be better to preserve a dramatic form throughout. The traveller shall be made modern in his tastes; but whether it be well to have anything like discovery in these short pieces, I am doubtful. The following eclogue does not please me so much as the first, but it is true to nature. It wants something. I had introduced it by some descriptive lines; but they were useless, and now it seems to want description. Again I have a traveller, and as I am afraid I shall want another of these peripatetics, this is a reason for making the first the owner of the mansion.

[The eclogue here copied is that entitled 'The Wedding.']

"Perhaps you will find many of the expressions provincialisms, which are familiar to my ears. I am apprehensive of this fault. For the rest, it is I think dramatic, but something is wanting.

"I thank you for your ode. You have taught me enough of Klopstock to see that you have caught his manner. Your metre is too regular to admit of irregularity, I think, and it appears to me improper in blank verse stanzas to break a

line. Is not the conclusion too Spartan for a modern mother? The Irish business has been almost a counterpart to the death of the Girondists; yet who would not be content so to die, in order so to have lived? Am I not quoting you? Benyowski's adventures were published in two quarto volumes some two years ago. I read them at that time with great delight, and have never seen them since. He was a complete adventurer, and the authenticity of his discoveries is, I believe, questionable. Poor Athanasia met with a harder fate than Kotzebue has assigned her: the Governor was killed in the insurrection: she accompanied Benyowski and died of a broken heart. The attempt to colonize Madagascar was a good one. There was a strange kind of imposture practised on the natives; but it ended, as is supposed, in the death of all the settlers. The book will amuse you. Poor Benyowski lived twenty years too soon; he would have made an admirable revolutionist.

"Burnett has given me no hint of his medical mania; nor has Lloyd, I believe, had any intimation of it, who was at Yarmouth with him. This makes me hope that they are only passing thoughts. Some short time after I left him, he told me his intention of taking a small farm near Yarmouth, a plan which, if he proceeds cautiously in, I thought a very good one, and encouraged

him in it. This would employ him, and allow him no leisure for his scruples, which arise more from indolence than anything else; and should he at last give up the ministry, he would not be thrown upon the world. I do not think it possible that he could succeed as a physician, and he is totally unfit to struggle with the world.

"I shall look for Fellowes's book when I reach home. We have been visiting here for three weeks, and in the course of another shall return. Your chronological researches I can only wonder at; my studies have never been directed that way. Have you seen a volume of Lyrical Ballads, &c.? They are by Coleridge and Wordsworth, but their names are not affixed. Coleridge's ballad of 'The Ancient Mariner' is, I think, the clumsiest attempt at German sublimity I ever saw. Many of the others are very fine; and some I shall reread, upon the same principle that led me through Trissino, whenever I am afraid of writing like a child or an old woman.

"I get on with Madoc; the sixth book will soon be finished, and I have the whole plan ready. I have also another plan for an Arabian poem of the wildest nature; the title—'The Destruction of the Dōm Danyel,' which, if you have read the continuation of the Arabian Nights Entertainments, you will recollect to be a seminary for evil magicians under the roots of the sea.

It will have all the pomp of Mohammedan fable, relieved by scenes of Arabian life, and these contrasted again by the voluptuousness of Persian scenery and manners. There is not room left to send you the outline; however, I shall like to have your remarks, while it is yet easy to profit by them.

"Pray remember me to your mother, and to all who may inquire for me. I should particularize your Madame Roland.

"God bless you,—yours truly,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

William Taylor to Robert Southey.

"Norwich, September 26, 1798.

"You must allow me, my dear Southey, to begin about Burnett: he and his fortunes are uppermost with me just now. He will have told you that his resolution to quit the ministry for medicine is so decisive, as to have induced him to mention his intentions to Mr. Manning. He has indeed determined to stay another year at Yarmouth, but in the spring the congregation are to have notice in form. In correspondence I have said everything dissuasive I could think of, because in giving advice one should always take the cautious side; but I wonder not at all that a man of spirit should dislike a profession, which has nothing progressive in reserve, and

will never enable him to maintain a wife and family better than he could today. Considering the resolution as irrevocable, it remains to consider how his wants can be supplied. He must have £100 a year for three years at his command. After graduation, he says, he is determined to be content with what he can earn by literary labour. So he must. It is very obvious that my attachment ought to offer him all he wants, but this does not suit me. My father is coming back from America with bad news. Invisible reductions at least must be made in our style of living. When some privations are to be inflicted on each member of the family, I shall certainly choose to strike off much of *my* claims on the common funds, and shall have little to spare for the whims of good-nature. It is only out of my literary earnings that I can conveniently aid him: I must therefore content myself with offering a single hundred pounds; and as all reason-giving looks like excuse-making, I must very coldly and despotically tell him, I will go no further. In what circumstances is his father? Is E—— likely to assist a man who has no longer the dissenting interest at heart? Is not Lloyd able and attached enough to help him? I am afraid he will find his congregation to consist of very prudent people, who will not offer him a year or two's pay in advance. Is not the probable in-

convenience of this resolution to Burnett so great, that it ought yet to be reconsidered? Mr. Manning would gladly hold his tongue for the sake of keeping him, and no evil would come of the confidence.

"Your friend Mr. Lloyd has been addressing to me a tragedy. I suspect he was piqued by those words in my letter to Burnett which attributed to him 'an absence of tragic power.' He had a mind to convince me I was wrong; I am obstinate, and have been abusing his tragedy from beginning to end, to convince him I was right. I thought it odd he should send to me his poem to read; he has older and dearer friends, who are better judges of the taste of an English public than I, whose taste has been moulded on that of a foreign public. I wrote to him very freezingly—I do not know enough of his heart as yet, to take strong interest in his head. The afternoon I drank tea with him at Burnett's, he struck me as better qualified to assert empire over the understanding than over the feelings—as a good reasoner—as a man of great capacities. His sensibility, I suspect, is too soon excited to be very profound, and attains its maximum of irritation by inferior woes. It is a mark of debility, not of vigour, in children and old men to be intoxicated with a small quantity of wine. Those who can die of a rose in aromatic pain,

have not grief in reserve for Medea's last embrace of her children. If I am wrong, set me right about Lloyd. By all means send for his tragedy: you will read with emotion much of Julia's complaining, and all the mysterious remorse of Colvil. The hero too, St. Austyn, is well drawn; but O'Flaherty and some of the brothel-scenes are ignoble. Mr. Lloyd is so very gentlemanlike a man, I was surprised at his painting them. Is not he one of those men who underrate their talents and overrate their productions, and who are too much used to complaisance to bear severity?

"I cannot find a fault with the new eclogue, for which I am very sorry; and yet I do not prefer it to the other. I read it to Mrs. John Taylor. 'It quite goes to the heart,' she says; especially the

> 'God forgive me! but I often wish
> To see them in their coffins.'

"*That* inflicts a shudder, and rivets itself in the remembrance. *This* is the more pathetic eclogue. The other selects more originally the features for description. I am glad you are intending to build with the talisman of song a magic palace on the site of the Domdaniel of Cazotte. It remained for you to assert a claim to a certain wildness of fancy—to what shall I call it?—to mythological imagination. If your poetic style

be improvable, I think it is by increasing its compression. You are apt to make syllables of auxiliaries and particles. Now the simple, tending of itself to feebleness, requires peculiar neatness of expression. As to ' Madoc,' I expect to blame in it an anachronism of idea, similar to that which increases the interest and diminishes the artistical propriety of Schiller's ' Don Carlos.' Of the ' Lyrical Ballads ' I have not yet obtained a sight, and I do not like to buy books until I have read them—I have resold so many. I wonder some one of our poets does not undertake what the French and Germans so long supported in great popularity—an Almanack of the Muses—an annual Anthology of minor poems—too unimportant to subsist apart, and too neat to be sacrificed with the ephemeral victims of oblivion. Schiller is the editor of one, and Voss of another such poetical calendar in Germany ; their names operate as a pledge that no sheer trash shall be admitted. What say you to the following eclogue of Voss's ? it is not a bucolic, but a diabolic idyll*.

" I had not patience to hexametrize it for you. Do I beat you in provincialisms ? I try however

* It is unnecessary to insert this translation, which under the title of ' The Devil in Ban ' has been already placed before English readers, in the Monthly Magazine, vol. vii. p. 139, and the ' Historic Survey,' vol. ii. p. 64.

to use no words of which I cannot etymologically defend the application. The provincialism of London has no right to call itself the only English. You ascribe right the 'Who would not be content so to die?' But I believe, if it were said to a very rational crowd, a great many would call out—I.

"I grow very antigallican. I dislike the cause of national ambition and aggrandizement, as much as I liked the cause of national representation and liberty. The window-tax is to be sold at fifteen years' purchase for stock at 60, 80, and 100, accordingly as three, four or five per cents. are taken. The tithe will come next in turn; and then—but not till then—the influence of the crown will be in danger, and will once more be declared, as of old, to have increased, be increasing, and ought to be diminished. Dr. Sayers has been sitting to Opie. I am to have the picture—it is very like. A son of Dr. Parry of Bath, Charles Parry, lately passed through this place on his way to Göttingen, a wonderfully accomplished young man. He is familiar with the whole extant mass of the beautiful in literary and plastic art. He told me he knows you, and has imitated your style of poetry. How angry the Antijacobin Magazine is with a reviewal of D'Ivernois in the appendix to the Monthly!

"Since I began writing to you, we again possess my father. His passage across the Atlantic was good—from Cork hither somewhat dangerous. He is in perfect health and spirits, just as when he left us. He passed three days at General Washington's house, with whom he is greatly delighted. Of his negroes Washington said, he wished to know how to provide for them with equal certainty and humanity on an emancipation scheme, and he should gladly concur in abolishing vassalage. He thought it would be necessary to educate on the soil a more provident generation, before they would be fitted for free labourers. Against further importations provisions are already made, which are rapidly travelling southward. He rises early and is alone till breakfast. In the morning he rode with my father over his farm, and invited him to write to him from England any improvement he might think or hear of. He dines late, sits at table an hour and half, and has his tea sent up into the study. He sups with the family, but not with parties, and goes to bed early. The Americans are all become antigallican.

"Yours,

"William Taylor, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 3.)

"Bristol, October 1st, 1798.

"I have written to Burnett, and urged to him

the first and more immediate difficulties that oppose his plan, as a reason for at least delaying it. These reasons strike me more forcibly than they can do you, from what I know of his connexions in this part of the country. His father is a wealthy farmer, just retired from business, but already dissatisfied with George for rejecting the profession he intended for him. Burnett has a brother-in-law, who has done him no kind offices; and his own brothers and sisters were, I have heard, somewhat jealous of him, who was to be the gentleman of the family. He has never mentioned it to me, but from many circumstances I know he has not been treated quite kindly at home. From that quarter I see little to hope. E—— is a good man, but he has many claims upon his purse, and then he will be sadly grieved and perhaps angry. He has the sectarian spirit stronger than any man I ever knew. Certainly Burnett will meet with no assistance from him; and for Lloyd, he has so many idle habits of expense, that he is himself always in want. He is one of a very large family, and his father complains of his thoughtlessness in many matters. All this is very hopeless. I have besought him to think again, and have urged him to set about some literary employment, to try his strength. Half his discontent arises from mere indolence. It may amuse

the present, and he will find it well to have something ready for the future. The period after his graduation does not alarm me so much. I look forward to an improved situation myself, and the means of assisting him: but I do not see how the first difficulties can be surmounted, and yet fear his resolution is irrevocable. Lloyd has promised me his tragedy, and I have been for some time vainly expecting it. You have well charactered him. A long acquaintance would enable you to add to what you have said, not to alter it. Lloyd is precipitate in all his feelings, and ready to be the dupe of any one who will profess attachment. I never knew a man so delighted with the exteriors of friendship. He was once dissatisfied with me for a coldness and freedom of manner: it soon wore off, and I believe he now sincerely regards me, though the only person who has ever upon all occasions advised, and at times reproved him, in unpalliated terms. Certainly he is a powerful reasoner, but he has an unhappy propensity to find out a reason for everything he does; and whether he drink wine or water, it is always metaphysically right. His feelings are always good, but he has not activity enough for beneficence. I look at his talents with admiration, but almost fear that they will leave no adequate testimony behind them. I love him, but I cannot esteem him,

and so I told him. He thinks nothing but what is good, but then he only *thinks*. I fear he will never be useful to others or happy in himself.

"I cannot like the eclogue I sent you, and yet cannot tell how to mend it. It wants something; and though in parts it may affect, I fear it is feeble and uninteresting in the whole. The following ballad is better of its kind. The story is in Matthew of Westminster, and in Olaus Magnus; but it was the mere mustard-seed that has grown up to what you see*.

"I thank you for your diabolic idyll; it is admirable. The idea delights me; it might be made the vehicle of some good satire. Ben Jonson's witches tell what they have been doing, and a meeting of devils might make fine confessions of whom they had been visiting. I will send you the plan of the Domdaniel, which I think promises to be a magnificent structure.

"God bless you!—yours very truly,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 3.)

"Norwich, 23rd December, 1798.

"My dear Southey,

"Don't be angry, or rather do be angry, that I have kept your last letter above these two

* The ballad contained in this letter is the original copy of the 'Old Woman of Berkley.'

months unanswered. I wish you to wish to have heard, but not to be deaf to my apology. Burnett wrote me that you were leaving Bristol, and that he was awaiting your new address. It is only within these few days I have learned from him that you are once more *in statu quo* as to place; but from what he tells me, I fear that your health is suffering from lettered labour. As he talks however of your having been recommended to walk eight miles a day, I trust you are not very bad, and are only cut down for a time from an epic poet to a sonneteer. Tell me particularly how you do. Burnett, as you no doubt know from him, is trying to get a bishopric under the kings of Brentford. His promotion to a diminution of salary, if at all, will probably take place about Lady-day, when I presume he means to part with Henry. He urges me to give you my opinion about placing your brother with Mr. Maurice of Normanston, near Lowestoff. Maurice is a most worthy, humane, generous, respectable man. His assiduity and regularity in the conduct of his employ are exemplary. Much pains are taken under his roof to inspire habits of piety, a leaning to republican theories of government, and the passive, remonstrating morality of the Christian, in preference to that of the man of honour. Maurice's terms are understood to be high, so that Henry would be educated

with young men of property (there are *ten* I believe), which is a consideration of no trifling consequence to one who intends himself for the professions. In consequence of what Burnett said, I wrote to Maurice, from whom I have a very handsome letter in reply. He is desirous, very desirous, of being entrusted with Henry, and leaves me entirely master of the pecuniary conditions. I have only to write him so, or so, or so, and he takes it. This is his language to me. But it will be time enough to send you the letter, which is rather long, with my private comments, after you have determined whether it ought at all to be thought of.

"Your ballad—I believe I told you that Dr. Sayers had written one on this story, which he found in 'Olaus Magnus,' and that, not liking it, he had excluded it from his collection of poems. I did not tell you that I too had at that same period tried my hand on the story*. If I could have come at copies of the two, I would have sent you them. We both like your ballad infinitely—it is the best possible way of treating the story—it is everything that a ballad should be—old in the costume of the ideas, as well as of the style and metre—in the very spirit of the superstitions of the days of yore—perpetually climbing in interest, and indeed the best original En-

* See the Life of Sayers, p. 82.

glish ballad we know of. *Distorted*, *Commotion*, *Trepidation*, and perhaps *Terror*, are words of too modern a complexion for the antique hue of the piece—they are like the repairs of a modern painter on a time-mellowed Salvator Rosa. I thought that the chains broke too easily for the previous stress that had been laid on them by the dying witch. I read it aloud at the conversation-party. It produced a great effect, and, after the silence of a chill curiosity, quite a clapping of hands. They desired me eagerly to send you their thanks—I have kept them a long while.

" I have just received a large parcel of German reviews by Stephen Weaver Browne, whom you saw here, who is now returned from Hamburgh, and is going to settle at Berlin. He says we have no conception in this country of the universality and intensity of German infidelity. It is true he was not gifted by Minerva with the faculty of seeing gods. He passed, he says, for superstitious, because he called himself sceptical. Only the women visit the churches ; a man who enters is stared at as one likely to be rude or drunk. All the new publications are trash. The poetry, translated—the novels, hocus-pocus tricks—metaphysics, the jargon of Kant—morals, the barbarism of French licentiousness—history, mere catalogues of old books. The sunset

of German literature is come. Indeed the world has been enlightened so long, that we begin to get sick of reading and writing art and science, and shall be perfectly ripe for the setting-in of the new dark age, by the time revolution-makers are ready to employ anarchy in bringing it on. Kant will be the Plotinus of the future offuscating philosophy, and Germany the Alexandria which is to re-barbarize the intellect of French Rome, and, through it, of all Europe. The philosophic papacy of the Illuminés will amuse new fools with general councils of college-students to discuss the unascertainable, and to bruise new crowns beneath the downfall of the men whose gibberish is orthodox. Farewell.

" Yours,

" William Taylor, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 4.)

" Thursday, December 27th, 1798.

" I was very glad to see your hand-writing again. Burnett did not rightly, it appears, understand my leaving Bristol ; it was merely to keep a term, that is, to eat three indifferent dinners in bad company. * * * * I have been much indisposed, and my recovery I am afraid will be slow. My heart is affected, and this at first alarmed me, because I could not understand it: however, I am scientifically satisfied that it is only a nervous affection. Sedentary habits have in-

jured my health. This prescription of exercise prevents me from proceeding with the works that interest me, and only allows time for the task-labour, which is neither pleasant to look on to nor to remember. My leisure is quite destroyed. Had it not been for this, I should ere now have sent you the remainder of my eclogues: it is now almost too late, for the volume is half printed; however I have reserved them to conclude it with, that I may receive your corrections. The 'Old Mansion House' is altered as you suggested, and materially improved by it. I like the spirit of what follows, and have read it aloud with some effect.*

"I hope you will not be tired of my travellers. There are no more, and the first is turned into a stranger—because he happens to be at home. I print as one of these eclogues the story which you may remember in the Monthly Magazine with my name, and which the printer thought proper to call *plaintive*, because *plain* did not please him. The other two I will send as soon as I can copy them; they will be printed within a fortnight, and if you have leisure I shall be thankful for your correction. I recognized you in 'Climb, climb Aboukir's tower†!' I am

* The eclogue here referred to is the 'Sailor's Mother.'

† The Ode on the Battle of Aboukir. Monthly Magazine, vol. vi. p. 366.

curious to see how you and Dr. Sayers dressed the 'Old Woman.' Not knowing the story when you mentioned his ballad, I thought the subject a mine of my own discovery. 'Commotion' must stay, for the rhyme. 'Trepidation' I had altered, perhaps not much for the better; the line now stands, 'Grew a quiver of consternation.'

'God bless you,—yours truly,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

The two eclogues of 'The Last of the Family' and the 'Ruined Cottage' were sent two days afterwards with the following short note.

"December 30th, 1798.

"What you said respecting the foreign Almanacks of the Muses has served me as a hint, and I think of speedily editing such a volume. For this I have more motives than one. Among others, that there are some half a hundred pieces of my own, too good to perish with the newspapers in which they are printed. I have also among my more intimate friends some who will willingly contribute, and if I should find all my stores deficient by a sheet or two for the due size of a volume, why it is but turning to and filling it myself. Can you assist me with a title? Pratt has damned the word Gleanings, which I thought of: and will you assist me with any-

thing else? I have some tolerable balladlings, and some tolerable stories for more. I have had a singular book to review—the 'Mémoires Historiques de Stephanie Louise de Bourbon Conti.' Have you seen it? It is a lamentable tale of wickedness under the old regime and injustice in the new.

"God bless you,—yours affectionately,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 4.)

"Norwich, January 4th, 1799.

"Yours of the 27th December arrived just after I had directed to you Maurice's letter*.

* Much of the correspondence on this subject is necessarily suppressed here, being too strictly private for publication. The treaty was brought to a satisfactory issue, in a spirit so honourable to *all* the parties concerned, that a full knowledge even of the minutest particulars would only exalt their characters in the estimation of those who value generosity of conduct and the objects of a liberal education. William Taylor's share in it affords another proof of the vivacity with which he always came forward to serve his friends, and more especially those in whom he perceived indications of opening talent and the promise of future excellence; and the confidence here reposed in him, on both sides, evinces the high sense entertained of his judgement and rectitude. The Rev. Michael Maurice, whose name occurs so prominently in this transaction, was distantly connected, by intermarriages, with William Taylor's family, and in every respect eminently worthy of the commendation here bestowed. He has long relinquished the charge of instructing youth, retaining—in

"Your idylls—have not they a turn too uniformly plaintive and melancholy? Must each include a scene of distress—a pathetic tale? A weeping willow, waving in a gale of sighs over a pond of tears, is a luxurious object two or three times, but not a whole alley of weeping willows. Apollo in tears over the wounded Hyacinth is a fine subject for the painter, but not Argus in tears. Do our rustic manners afford no cheerful sides, no pictures of felicity, or graceful merriment? Have we no May-days, no harvest-homes, no Christmas-times? Is not superstition natural to country-folks, and convenient to the poet? Milton seems to have thought the elfin mythology fitted for the eclogue, when he talks of

'Young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holiday,'

and describes the stories they told 'over the spicy nut-brown ale.' A few rawhead and bloody-bone stories, so told, might have their effect, and would suit that species of tragic eclogue to which you seem to tend; but such things are

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some instances unweakened by the lapse of nearly half a century—the warm esteem and gratitude of his former pupils; and still remembered for his ardently active benevolence by all the social circles through which he has passed in the various stages of a long and useful life. He is now living at Reading, and his son, the Rev. Frederic Denison Maurice, is the present Chaplain of Guy's Hospital, and one of the lecturers at King's College, London.

probably already printed off. Of the three you show me, the first is very good. If you want to be rid of the word 'Traveller,' perhaps 'Merchant' would do as well, since the dialogue may pass in the door-porch of any house where the woman can seek relief. I almost think I would have made Robert Southey an interlocutor, and at the description of the accident on board the Mars, have indulged an explosion of a line or two about his brother. The woman must then turn out to be the same for whom Thomas left some money with you.

"2. The 'Last of the Family' should, I think, have died *in the army*, and, as he does, of disease; why else the passion for hearing of Eustace and Sir Henry? Neither is it to Gregory, I think, that master Edward would have applied for the history of his remoter ancestry. If the latter part admits improvement, it may perhaps be by prolonging and circumstantializing the description of a funeral of family.

"3. The 'Ruined Cottage' is adapted to endure. If I understand it right, it is not in dialogue, but is a tale told, on a walk, by a young man to his friend. In this case the break,

'One only care
Hung on her aged spirits,'

to—

'part from her dear girl,'

is nearly unintelligible; for the *she* of the prece-

ding paragraph is Joanna, and there is no interruption, no return to the present to account for the transition. The descriptive parts of this idyll are capital—are unsurpassable. There is an idyll by Klopstock, of which I have only seen the reviewal, in which he describes himself, Gleim, and some other German poet, as carrying their half-dozen bottles of hock into an arbour, smoking and drinking there till they were very merry, then stripping and bathing in a brook hard by, and reeling homeward by moonlight. I should not think the English idyllist wise, who made himself a character in such a scene; but the idea of such a frolic comes within the natural limits of the eclogue; and the singing of a good song or two during the discourse is a resource of variegation often recurred to with success by Voss and his followers. Do you recollect Gay's 'Friday,' or 'The Dirge'? It has the fault of being witty, but has also a great share of truly bucolic merit.

"A convenient title for your proposed 'Annuals of Parnassus' I cannot fix on. I have an aversion for the phraseology of the classical mythology, because it is so hacknied; and without recurring to 'Rags of the Muses,' or 'Litter of Pegasus,' or 'Pastimes of Phœbus,' it would be difficult to help you out. I should not advise your turning to Bragur or Iduma, unless you

intended chiefly to consecrate the work to arctic blossoms, and to employ the blood of Kwaser for your ink. This yearly anthology must be severe in its selections, and not threaten *anniverses of any verses.* I shall transcribe for you an ' Ode to Lake Keswick,' when you are ready to receive it, and perhaps something more. Do you include any class of poetry, the comic as well as the serious, the ænigma as well as the ode? It would be well to do so, and to forbid nothing but excessive length. You must advertise for contributions in the Monthly Magazine at least, and evolve your plan in a short dissertation. The first German Musen-almanach was published in 1770, under the protection of Bürger, assisted by Gotter and Kästner. This form of work is copied from a Parisian one, both in name and plan; but by whom it was set on foot in France, I do not know. I suspect it to have grown out of the ' Ladies' Memorandum-books,' which commonly contain an anthology of songs and riddles, and which would easily mould into a regular receptacle for those poemets, those insect ditties, those dragon-flies (perish the name! they are a beautiful animal), those libellas of Helicon, which aspire only to a summer's existence, to sport a double pair of wings, to orb their rings of love, and die in a bathing-place.

" Theseus abdicating his crown and advising

the Athenians to found a democracy—Stolberg has made a chorus-drama of it, which I am abridging into a monodrama. But it will not do—no modern Theseus will appear. We must resign ourselves to have no resignations.

" Yours,

" WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

" Happy years to you!"

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 5.)

" January 4th, 1799.

" I thank you, my dear friend, for the trouble you have taken in settling Henry, and the interest you discover for his welfare. Maurice's letter is a very handsome one. I wish I could answer it to my own satisfaction; but it is a difficult task to express obligation that one cannot repay. Perhaps at midsummer I may be near enough to house him, as I have some thoughts of passing a few weeks at Cambridge, when our time is expired here, for the sake of the libraries.

" I am anxious to know what prospect of success Burnett has at Brentford. The plan is so far better than his former one, that it does not leave him at once to his own resources. Reviewing too is a good way of breaking him in to work: the subject is given, and the task required; no time need be lost in beating about the bushes to start something to pursue. Yet this new pro-

spect offers little or nothing more to ambition than his present situation; however it will employ him, and employment is what he wants.

"I should ascribe the review of Amos Cottle's 'Edda,' and the version of 'Vafthoudmismal,' in the Monthly Magazine*, to you, if I thought you understood the Icelandic language. Is that the case? He was in a hurry, and wanted northern learning, but seemed to have no idea of knowing how or where to look for it. The 'Edda' fell into his hands and delighted him. His brother, who knows no language but English, wanted to read it, and he had begun a prose translation, when I advised him to versify it: in the course of six weeks he had the book half printed. All this was not as it should have been. However his book will make the Runic tales more familiar, and may perhaps give a good direction to the genius of some young man, into whose hands it may fall. It would be my intention, if I could speculate upon leisure some three years hence, to build up a Runic song, but I must clear the ground first. My head has at present the materials for three great works in it, each deserving a whole and undivided attention; the 'Kalendar,' of which I hope this year to publish one volume—'Madoc,' which I ex-

* Vol. vi. p. 457; and Monthly Review, vol. xxvii. p. 381.

pect to finish this summer, for nine books are done—and the 'Dom Daniel'; of this last I will now sketch you the outline.

"You know the Mahommedan tradition of the Garden of Iram. A female Arab and her son, a boy about twelve years old, have escaped the destruction of their tribe, and are wandering at night in the deserts. They find themselves in this garden, and one Adite still existing in it, who, when his nation were destroyed, had for some deed of goodness been saved from their damnation, and left to live in that utter solitude till he thought himself prepared to die. At times Azrael appeared to him, and inquired if he was ready; but though tortured by lonely existence, still he dared not meet his judgement. As he concludes his tale, the angel stands before them, and offers death to the woman and the Adite: she is a devout Mussel— -woman, I suppose it must be—and embraces the Adite; Azrael raises his sword and the drops of bitterness fall on them. The design of this is to impress strongly with devotion the boy, reserved for a great exploit—the destruction of the Dom Daniel. A wandering tribe found him: he grows up among them, and forgetful that he has been marked out for the especial service of the Prophet, attaches himself to Oneiza. Some miracle summons him; he is sent to learn preparatory knowledge, for

his journey, from Harut and Marut at Babel, and from the Simorg. The magicians lay snares for him. He is entrapped by Aladeules, the account of whose paradise Purchas gives from Marco Polo. This he destroys; but finds Oneiza in his harem, and dwells with her in the delightful regions of Cashmere. Her death by the judgement of God rouses him. He arrives at a place like the Port des Français, which Perouse discovered, a bay surrounded by glaciers, profoundly silent, and where no wind ever ruffles the waters. A vessel receives him. The spirits of all who had failed in the adventure navigate it, for their punishment, to sail in those cold seas till the adventure was accomplished.

"I have a very vague idea of what passes under the roots of the sea; however, when all is accomplished, a voice from heaven bids Thamama ask his reward. He resigns himself, like the Argive brethren, to God; the Sansur, the icy wind of death, pervades him, and he is welcomed in paradise by Oneiza's houri form.

"You see a rude outline, but it may be made a glorious picture. I hesitate whether to write in blank verse or stanzas: there is but too much time to consider. God bless you!

"Yours affectionately,

"Robert Southey."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 5.)

"Norwich, January 28th, 1799.

"Yours of the 4th January lies, I perceive, unanswered. Henry is, no doubt, by this time at Mr. Maurice's, to whom you will probably have written respecting the studies to be preferred. The variety and popularity of pursuit encouraged under that roof are convenient to merchants and men of business; but for professional men, who will have after-leisure, and who will always have sufficient motive to teach themselves whatever is to be learnt without effort, it is probably most expedient to be confined during youth to the *laborious* studies. Adam Smith used to say, had he a son, nothing but Greek and mathematics should be taught him; the other departments of human pursuit were mere child's play.

"Burnett's Brentford project is given up necessarily; the determination to go next Michaelmas to Edinburgh has ensued. He talks of beginning botany with the snowdrops and primroses: he is well stationed for detecting new sea-weeds.

"You err not in ascribing to me both the reviewal of Cottle's 'Edda,' and the version of the Gothic cosmogony. My knowledge of the Icelandic is not, indeed, very profound, but I have gone through the grammar in Hickes's 'Thesaurus.' I possess many good vocabularies of the

northern tongues, which all resemble the German and English, and, like the Dutch and Danish, are in a high degree intelligible to me. I had by me the German translation of Grüter, and thought myself strong enough to venture on the sort of criticism I adopted. I hope he attributes to me no inurbanity, as I have given to his poetry at least *all* the praise which I think it deserves.

" I am too ignorant of Mahommedan fiction to be a competent critic of the fable of your ' Dom Daniel.' From the habit of reading the more fanciful kinds of poetry in *rimed stanzas*, I should prefer for it that form of mould which the Ariostos, the Tassos and the Wielands have agreed to apply. The fable of a poem is, in Wieland's opinion, of very inferior consequence to its beauties of detail ; yet of his own works only those have been successful whose fable is neat, whole, and interesting: his ' Idris,' with all its beauties of detail, is insupportable. If I mistake not, it is an advantage when natural and intelligible human motives stimulate the conduct of the heroes, and when the mythology, however profuse, rather adorns than prompts, rather aggrandizes than composes, the business of the piece. The succession of various and splendid scenery in a harlequinade is far less gratifying than a similar succession in an opera, which for every *why* pro-

vides a *therefore*. The great merit of the machinery in the 'Oberon' lies in its furnishing an adequate cause for events merely marvellous in the romance.

"I have transcribed a brace of poems*, which may crawl into the 'Anthology' when it suits: the first is too long by the first forty lines, yet they must remain. Dr. Sayers is improving the notes of his 'Dramatic Sketches,' against the next edition of his poems becomes requisite; probably he will have to change his printer. I observe with pleasure an advertised edition of the works of Sir William Jones. Few men have united a taste so elegant, a learning so comprehensive, a love of liberty so entire, and a virtue so equable. His poems are the sweetest blossoms of the rose-garden of volupsy; his dissertations are cameos, which display at once the artist and the most recondite lore of antiquity. Selden and Milton were his predecessors in a like career; he may be placed between them—no other country can boast his rival. From Earl Stanhope I differ, and wish the union with Ireland could have been accomplished. A hundred new

* These poems are, 1st, the 'Ode to Lake Keswick, or Topographical Ode,' with which the first volume of the Annual Anthology commences; and 2nd, 'The Dirge,' inserted at page 36 of the same work.

members, freely chosen, would have made our House of Commons independent.

"Yours,

"WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 6.)

"Sunday night, February 24th, 1799.

"Thank you for the 'Dirge,' which I hope neither of us may ever deserve, and for 'Lake Keswick.' I begin to know you now in prose and verse. There is a profusion of imagery, a rapidity of combination, which belong to nobody else; like the Eastern mosques, every part is beautiful, and all the parts blend into an impressive whole. I knew you in the 'Edda,' with which everybody is pleased, and I thank you for lenity there; I know you in that —— Herbert Croft's book, of which I have something to say speedily in the Magazine; and in the 'Abbé Barruel,' whom I suspect of being a great scoundrel, for he cannot possibly believe all he attempts to prove. On your ode I offer a few remarks, before the press closes on it. In the first line would it not be better, by an easy transposition, to get rid of the superfluous syllable, and write it, '*O Keswick, o'er thy lake*'? for should not rhymeless odes be as harmonious as possible? In the second, *sail* and *gale* rhyme:

is not the second stanza incongruous? a cloud fathoming the sky seems to reverse the fact. Stanzas 5 and 7: it would, I think, be better to continue the conditional tense. 15, *streak* and *cheek*. 16, I would rather *time* destroyed you, than *woe*. 23, is not *seer* an inappropriate word? 30, the moon does not *wind*.

"I do not think the ode too long: a bad poem cannot be too short; the reverse is not quite true, and yet I am always sorry to come to the end of what has delighted me. Will you have the stanzas separated in printing, or connected, as they sometimes run into each other? And what signature do you choose? I have a curious optical anecdote for the Magazine, and shall send the advertisement with it: it will be better perhaps to call it by the original name of the 'Almanack,' as that title will be recognized on the continent, and I hope to equal the continental collections.

"Judging by what I hear and feel, I do not think the 'Oberon' will be popular in England, at least not in Sotheby's translation. It only *diverts*: it does not kindle the imagination; it does not agitate and make the heart beat, like the wonders of Ariosto and Tasso. Wieland's opinion of the effect of story is contrary to all experience; witness the 'Thebaid,'—witness the 'Henriade.'

"Your Dr. Smith is to treat us with botanical lectures, which, I fear, can hardly be so timed as to benefit me. Mrs. Smith is hopelessly ill; so I am told by those who best know.

"I am vexed about Burnett, and uneasy as to his future fortunes; there is not only the difficulty of subsisting during his medical studies, but the interval after they are completed, before he can get into practice. The Brentford scheme might have satisfied him, by keeping him employed. In every way of life there is a crowd struggling to get on, and George is not calculated to make his way in a crowd. The Yarmouth situation, with nothing better in view, was surely not enough to content a young man; but is he likely to better himself by the alteration? if, indeed, his restlessness arises from unsettled opinions, one cannot wish him to have acted otherwise. The prospect appears to me a very gloomy one: he has been too long accustomed to do little, ever to accomplish much.

"We have a very extraordinary young man lately settled here, who is to manage the Pneumatic Institution. Beddoes mentioned him in the Monthly Magazine; he is not yet twenty-one, nor has he applied to chemistry more than eighteen months, but he has advanced with such seven-leagued strides as to overtake everybody; his name is Davy. I have been labouring at his

essays on light, &c.; but he is going to show me his poems, of which I hear much from tolerable judges, and which I shall better understand. Whatever his verses may be, he is a great acquisition to this neighbourhood; and if his future progress be at all answerable to the success with which he has set out, he must rank with the first names of the century.

"You mentioned young —— to me in one of your letters. I have seen him but seldom, and to little advantage: he displeased me by a forwardness and a desire of displaying himself, the effect, I am told, of being always shown off at home, and having always been admired; this will probably wear away. I did not know that he ever wrote poetry. His drawings are very fine indeed. Whether his taste in painting be good or not, better judges than me must determine: he spoke with high praise of Barry, and therefore, I suppose, scientifically; for no common eye will ever look five minutes on any picture of Barry's. I was quite disappointed at finding so little said of Voss's 'Louisa' in the Monthly Review. You have made me hunger and thirst after German poetry. Your hexameters from Klopstock are very fine: one or two inversions of syntax might have been avoided, but these little corrections are always more obvious to a reader than a writer. They gave me pleasure too, as by their

situation rendering such metres not quite strange to an English ear.

"My poems, I hope, will reach you in the course of the week. I am clearing off other things, to begin the 'Dom Daniel,' which will be in stanzas; the rhymes, I believe, irregularly arranged, and perhaps the lines long or short at pleasure. God bless you!

"Yours affectionately,
"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 6.)

"Norwich, March 4th, 1799.

"My dear Friend,

"Is all that Burnett writes me true?—that your health declines alarmingly—that you are apprehensive of an ossification of the heart? no, no, I will neither believe nor contemplate such possibility. You have a mimosa-sensibility, which agonizes in so slight a blast; an imagination excessively accustomed to summon up trains of melancholy ideas, and marshal funeral processions; a mind too fond by half, for its own comfort, of sighs and sadness, of pathetic emotions and heart-rending woe. You mis-see the dangers in expectation through the lens of a tear. It cannot be that the laws of nature interrupt with equal indifference the

career of the valuable and of the useless part of her offspring, — that no preserving spirit watches over—— Besides, I used to fancy myself on the brink of the grave, and to discover in myself all the hectic symptoms which I had heard my mother describe as having attempted her dissolution in early life ; I had falterings of the spirits and palpitations of the heart, feverish cheeks and unbidden tears. Having, however, from the mere accident of coming to live at home, gradually adopted a more stimulant plan of diet,—having learnt to drink wine and smoke tobacco, to go to bed late and to rise as before,—I have totally forgotten that I am no alchemist and do not possess the elixir of immortality. When I think my love of poetry on the decline, and that I am growing the Epicurean philosopher too fast, bathing, low-living and lying in bed soon enable me to write an ode again.

"Your objection to the inharmony of the first line is just. Has not the proposed correction this inconvenience, that it brings into the foreground the idea of Keswick, which is a town, instead of the *lake*, which is the object of the poem? Would both grounds of complaint vanish by reading, 'O'er thee, oh Keswick Lake'? From Norfolk lips *sail* and *gale* do not rhyme; but I object not at all to read, 'Oft would I hover on

the summer gale,'—or rather 'summer air,'—for *gale* and '*calmest* nook' are not very congruous. A cloud gaging the depth of the atmosphere by ascent from its inferior surface would not have struck you as incongruous from Pilatre de Rozier. The conditional tense, *I'd wring*, *I'd weave*, is harsher than *I'll wring*, *I'll weave*, which is further defensible on the ground that the poet *should* forget his metempsychosis was only imaginary. *Streak* and *cheek* must be altered; rhymes at the line's end are intolerable. I recommend, 'In many a fleecy *flake*.' Spenser has 'flakes of fire.' Line 66, I choose to die of *woe*, and it was my expectation when I wrote that, ten years ago. To *sear* is to discolour by burning, and is a common word with Spenser; I cannot fix on one more applicable: would you prefer singe, scorch, snatch, lick, gnaw, or what? To *wind* (A. S. *windan*, to turn) is to move in a circular direction, whence the *winding* stream, to *wind* thread, to *wind* oneself out of a scrape, &c., and in my opinion, with perfect propriety, the *winding* moon. If you will have a signature, you may take the anagram RYALTO; but I think little things, such as the Dirge, and what I may perhaps leave room to transcribe at foot, are as well without any; but I am not anxious to forbid the annexation.

"I think it easier you should always know me

in prose than in verse. Were I reviewing my own reviewals, I should say—This man's style has an ambitious singularity, which, like chewing ginseng, displeases at first and attaches at last. In his pursuit of the *curiosa felicitas*, he often sacrifices felicity to curiosity of expression: with much philological knowledge, and much familiarity among the European classics of all sorts, his innovations are mostly defensible, and his allusions mostly pertinent; yet they have both an unusuality which startles, and which, if ultimately approved, provokes at least an anterior discussion that is unpleasant. His highest merit is the appropriate application of his information: in his account of Rivarol you discover only his philological; in his account of Eichhorn only his theological; in his account of Gillier only his artistical; and of Wieland only his belles-lettristical pedantry, &c.—You detected me, no doubt, in Willich's 'Kant' last month, but perhaps not in Barry's 'Letter' this month. I expect soon to have done with reviewing wholly; I have had a difference with the editors of the Monthly Review, which will, no doubt, terminate in my separation. The venerable Dr. Griffiths, to whom Dr. Enfield had introduced me, grows old, and gradually turns over a labour, for which the infirmities of age are rapidly unfitting him, to his son, who is very

ignorant (I know him personally), and who, like all ignorant people, is very despotic. He has garbled, interpolated, and frivolously altered for the worse, several of my contributions. I have remonstrated with some arrogance, and have insisted on future conditions, to which their convenience cannot accede; I shall finish off what I have undertaken, and undertake no more. Whether Henry likes his new situation I know not. It is not my intention to oust Burnett of the wardship; when he is gone, I shall begin to take an interest in Henry's proficiency and welfare, and to ask occasionally if he loves play and minds his book. Burnett is going next month to Bristol.

"Voss's 'Louisa' I offered to review a year and a half ago, soon after reading Mr. Henley's account of it in the Critical; Griffiths told me (I quoted the date of my title-page) that it was too old for notice; judge of my surprise when Mr. Hübner's article appeared. Have you a mind for a piece of waggery at Bristol, to find up 'More Reliques of Rowley'? I have half a tragedy in stanzas, with northern mythology, chorusses, and the English mis-spelt, like Chatterton's 'Goddwyn': the title is 'Wortigerne*'; the quality of the composition less insipid than the 'Harold and Tosti,' which you read. [To this

* This appeared in the Monthly Magazine, vol. x. p. 643.

letter were added four poetical pieces for the Annual Anthology*, viz. ' Lines written in the sixteenth and parodied in the eighteenth century,' ' Ode to the Rainbow,' ' Epigram on Swedenborg's Miracles,' and ' Ode to the Burniebee.' Of the last of these he concludes by remarking] This is modern poetry, is it not? and not quite in the style of

" Your much attached,
" William Taylor, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 7.)

" My dear Friend, " Friday, March 12, 1799.

" Burnett has mistaken my complaint, and you have mistaken my disposition: at one time I was apprehensive of some local complaint of the heart, but there is no danger of its growing too hard, and the affection is merely nervous. The only consequence which there is any reason to dread is, that it may totally unfit me for the confinement of London and a lawyer's office. I shall make the attempt somewhat heartlessly, and discouraged by the prognostics of my medical advisers: if my health suffers, I will abandon it at once. At the age of twenty-five there is little leisure for writing. The world will be again before me, and the prospect sufficiently

* Vol. i. pp. 205, 201, and 64.

comfortable. I have no wants, and few wishes. Literary exertion is almost as necessary to me as meat and drink, and with an undivided attention I could do much. Once, indeed, I had a mimosa-sensibility, but it has long been rooted out: five years ago I counteracted Rousseau by dieting upon Godwin and Epictetus; they did me some good, but time has done more. I have a dislike to all strong emotion, and avoid whatever could excite it; a book like 'Werter' gives me now unmingled pain. In my own writings you may observe that I rather dwell upon what affects than what agitates.

"You will by this, I suppose, have received my volume; when another edition of the first is printed you shall have an answerable copy.

"I should much like more relics of Rowley, were it not that the language would preclude them, like other relics, from ever becoming popular; a ballad or two, some fragments of a romance, and more books of the 'English Metamorphoses,' might make an amusing volume: these are tempting subjects. Eight years ago I thought of continuing the 'Metamorphoses,' and soon after actually planned six books to complete the 'Faery Queen,' and wrote three cantos; the cantos I burnt, but the plans, I believe, still exist. I should like to see your play. Somebody should do for the Hindoo gods what Dr.

Sayers has done for Odin; we know enough of them now for a poetical system.

"A man of Lynn, who once wrote to ask me when I should publish 'Madoc,' has published a volume of verses himself lately,—George Goodwin is his name. In reviewing his book, I was amused at cautioning him against imitating a living writer; I will copy below a burlesque imitation, surely allowable, as being of myself. The Anti-jacobins seem to be ashamed of their own verses of late: they must have known as little of Coleridge and me, when they talked of our 'splay-foot madrigals of love,' as they did of the 'Taylors, the brothers, of Norwich,' correspondents to the Monthly Magazine. * * * *

"If Burnett had time to spare, and were advanced enough in medical knowledge, here would be a fine opportunity for him; the Pneumatic Institution opens tomorrow, and it will be part of their plan to receive students in medicine without a premium. The mischief is, that studies here, which would probably be of more importance than all the university lectures in Europe, could not assist him in graduating. I hope much from pneumatic medicine; but if the first trials should prove unsuccessful, an outcry will be raised against it. They will also find a difficulty in getting patients; even in hopeless disorders people are not fond of having experiments tried upon

them. Davy, the young man who has the management of the Institution, possesses most extraordinary talents: Beddoes speaks of him with unbounded praise, and he appears to deserve it.

"I thank you for your poetry. What is the *burnie*-bee? Is it not the humble-bee, or what we call the 'dumbledore,'—a word whose descriptive droning deserves a place in song? The 'Lines of the Sixteenth Century' I suppose you altered from Beaumont and Fletcher for the sake of the parody. The 'Almanack' goes to the press next week. I expect no communications out of the circle of my own acquaintance for the first volume; but I hope the first volume will be popular enough to bring in cart-loads for the second. I have begun an 'Eclogue between the Devil and St. Anthony,' for which my saint-book furnished me with the hint: there are mines of poetry in the Popish legends; my 'Kalendar' will be rich in them."

The remaining part of this letter is chiefly occupied with the burlesque 'Inscription under an Oak.'

The next letter from Robert Southey (No. 8.) commences with a copy of the eclogue entitled 'The Argument between Satan and St. Anthony,' with the following continuation:—

"March 18, 1799.

"I have been copying your 'Lake Keswick' for the press. It is one of those poems that the more it is read the more it must be liked,—brimful of beauties, like the scenery which it describes; you immediately feel it to be fine, but the longer it is contemplated the more interesting it becomes. I never attempt the ode, it is the kind of poetry I like least,—perhaps because it was the last I understood. I fed upon Spenser years before Collins was intelligible to me; the consequence is, that I approve only the one and love the other. * * * *

"Of America we have sad accounts here. The English emigrants complain bitterly. That they should feel the want of cultivated society is not to be wondered at, but it is their own fault that they do not cluster together. Priestley writes that he is to the full as obnoxious to the people there as ever he was in England. Their Sedition Bill had for its first clause, that all persons who had fled their country on charges of treason or sedition, and taken refuge in the United States, should be delivered back to their respective governments. The clause was indeed thrown out, but what a spirit does it show when it could be proposed! England is certainly the best place now. * * * *

"On my own account I am sorry for the

Monthly Review; the others are good for little, and that will sink to their level. They treat me in the Critical in the manner you complain of, but my reviews are written with so little expense of time and thought that I am indifferent. Who corrects me, and tames me, and qualifies me into insipidity, I know not: I give praise to a good book, with as much pleasure as the author will receive it; to a moderate one I am merciful, and that must be very bad indeed that provokes severity.

"The 'Almanack' will mostly be filled with my own pieces, under as many aliases as Satan or his Majesty. [I once computed the titles of both these personages, and the king out-titled the devil.] The first volume will be good enough to attract contributions innumerable for the second. It will, I think, be best to exclude translations, and nothing else: I hate to recognise an old acquaintance in a new suit of clothes that don't fit him, and this is the case with most translations. God bless you!

"Yours truly,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 7.)

"My dear Friend, "Norwich, March 25, 1799.

"I have received your second volume of poems, and have read them all with great plea-

sure; they are now in the hands of Dr. Sayers. The 'Vision of Joan of Arc' is worthy of Dante; but this will seem to you rather a phrase than a praise, after the opinion I intimated of that poet in the reviewal of Clayton's 'Tenhove's Memoirs of the Medici,' yet I know not how to convey better the sort of impression it made on me. Of the ballads I very much prefer the 'Old Woman of Berkeley'; and notwithstanding the wonderful excellence of the parody, I am half angry with you for undertaking it; the original is not recurred to again with so much sensation after the introduction of ludicrous associations. Of the eclogues, those that were new to me please me much, and all please me more than any other English compositions of the same class. There is merit truly dramatic in 'The Horse-shoe'; every interlocutor has his appropriate and consistent character, and not an idea would bear to be transferred to any other personage. It is not only in the descriptive and in the tenderly pathetic that you are at home,—there is an archness in some of your turns wondrously stimulant. Shall I own all to you? I sometimes think, that in vigour and rapidity of diction you might improve,—that expansion is apt to be feeble when it is not gaudy,—and that you have so much idea on every occasion, that you might cast some

of it away. The 'Sailor' is a deeply affecting ballad.

"I have two letters to thank you for. The burnie-bee is a provincial name of the beautiful beetle *Coccinella*, or lady-bird. Stolberg remarks that it abounds on the summit of Mount Ætna, which tends to interfere with my natural history, that supposes it fond of flowers and odours. The old English song was, I thought, altered from Massinger, but I doubt not you are more correct in ascribing it to Fletcher: I found it transcribed in a blank leaf of an old astrological almanack. We shall soon have to reprint such almanacks in compliment to the rising superstitions. * * * *

"Shall I object to the parody of the 'Inscription under an Oak,' that the word *umbrella'd* is synonymous with *parasol*, whereas it ought to be synonymous with *parapluie*? Sun-screen and rain-screen are the German expressions for these. There is sound sense in the leading idea, that we are too apt, from the artificial associations of thoughtless writers, to imbibe a disposition to be pleased with things not praiseworthy; and that the taste most consistent with the highest benevolence is, like the Chinese, to bepraise the *boated* lake, the *fishy* brook, the *mill-turning* stream, the *ricey* meadow and the *tea-clad* hill, the *timbered* mountain and the *fruitful* grove,

the *shoppy* street and *taxable* house. It would not be amiss to spin out this hint into a copy of verses by Kien Long, emperor of China, author of the 'Eulogy of Mookden,' the 'Praise of Tea,' &c., but I am not in the humour to undertake it; besides, it would require a little of the Darwin varnish, which takes a long time in making to any degree of perfection.

"'Saint Anthony and the Devil' is a lively dialogue, more lively than most of the eclogues: to the morality of it I do not subscribe; the Jaels, the Ehuds, and the Judiths are praised in bad books, by persons of a yet unevolved and inexperienced moral taste. Elisha again is an equivocal archetype, and appears to have enthroned and supported a very Robespierre in Jehu (2 Kings, x. 7). * * * *

"For Phillips's 'Necrology' I have been drawing up a life of Bürger. I have not yet learnt if it arrived in time. I have made the 'Almanack of the Muses' the turning-point of his existence, the cardinal centre of his exertions, the hinge of his activity; it is the decisive epocha of his pursuits, the critical hour of his bent, the culminating planet of his horoscope; as if a similar editorship were a *sine quâ non* in the career of poetical propriety. I have spent some pages too on the first reading of his 'Lenore,' conceiving it a far more important event

than his three marriages or his professional honours. I hold it right to see in the past nothing but what influences the present.

"The following ode, 'The Seas,' is versified most negligently, yet there is an ingenuity in the allegory, which may entitle it to a place in the Almanack.

[This ode is in the 'Anthology,' at p. 233. It was accompanied here by 'The Rover's Apology,' a short piece in sapphics, which does not appear in the work, and on which the writer made the following comment.]

"As this has no merit but that of scanning, be pleased to give one of your aliases to it,—a Horatiunculus, or something of that sort.

"To the income-tax will succeed a land-tax, which no doubt will provoke parliament to desert the minister. Meanwhile Germany will be freed, and we shall have the comfort of having spent to the last of the contest—for nothing.

"Yours,

"William Taylor, Jun."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 8.)

"My dear Southey, "Norwich, April 13, 1799.

"Dr. Smith, my neighbour and friend, allows me to request that he will personally deliver you this. You will have a satisfaction in ma-

king the acquaintance, not merely of the first botanist in Europe,—for what is that to you, who value plants only as they are impressive on the senses, and who of course think more of the graceful briony than of the most anonymous laurel that vegetates at Botany Bay for the brow of sedition?—but of a man whose amiable temper and excellence of heart are worthy to be known by you. Strow flowers in the path of his passage, and believe me, most affectionately,

"Your sincere friend,

"William Taylor, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 9.)

"My dear Friend, "Monday, April 15, 1799.

"Your allegory of 'The Seas' is as ingenious as any I remember to have seen. The negligence of the versification I do not perceive, perhaps from versifying myself with more negligence than should be allowed. If there be any inaccuracy in the allegory, it is making Taste cast a dwelling eye where Inspiration first waved her seraph wings. The 'Lover's Apology' scans, but would not be harmonious if read by one who did not understand the metre. Now when the classical metres are adopted in a modern language, the accent should be so arranged as to produce the necessary cadence, though read by

one unlearned. I will try to mould your sapphics to this—with my own I never yet had patience: but I have a great desire to render the metre popular, not only as it is in itself beautiful, but as a step toward naturalizing hexameters. Does not an English, and still more a German hexameter, take up a longer time in repetition than a Greek or Latin one, on account of the greater number of letters in the syllables? The letters in a line must be nearly a fourth more. Could we retrench one of the first four feet? The metre would not be difficult after we had written a hundred lines.

"My 'Dom Daniel' I shall, as you advised, write in stanzas; partly to avoid a sameness of style, which in blank verse would be almost inevitable. But I do not think it will be advisable to confine myself to a regular stanza: this license lessens the fetters of rhyme, and the ear will not be disappointed if the rhymes are not placed too distant from each other to be readily remembered: I think that writing in stanzas will correct the feebleness you observe. Simplicity would be out of character; I must build a Saracenic mosque, not a Quaker meeting-house.

"Beddoes and his young assistant are doing wonders at the Pneumatic Institution, but not by the gases; what they wanted for consumptions seems to be found in the fox-glove tincture.

Another stimulant for the absorbents they have found in the gaseous oxyd of azote,—at least such it appears to be, from the feelings of the few who have yet breathed it. Davy has made a curious botanical discovery—he has detected a coating of flint in all canes and grasses. A boy playing with two canes struck fire from them, and this led to the discovery. If Burnett had enough previous knowledge of medicine, he might profit more here than by any clinical lectures in Europe.

"My brother Tom is with me on his way to London, to pass for a lieutenancy. He has been helping me to cut up Madoc's ships and build galleys with them. There is a marine on board the Mars who persuaded his father to murder his mother, and then turned king's evidence and brought his father to the gallows; by the help of the devil, I think of working up this man's history into a ballad. By-the-by, Ferriar of Manchester has abused you for using the word 'hurry-skurry*.' It struck me that you had possibly placed it for some German phrase

* Illustrations of Sterne, with other Essays, by John Ferriar, M.D., p. 306.

"Here Bürger's muse, with ghostly terrors pale,
Runs 'hurry-skurry' through her nurs'ry tale.

"Hurry-skurry.—One of the phrases by which some translators of Bürger's 'Lenore' have attempted to convey an adequate impression of the energy and elegance of their original."

of a like nature. Is this the case? for I have his book to review.

"Barker is painting a picture from 'Mary the Maid of the Inn,' but from what part of the story I have not learnt. He might have found better subjects in my better pieces. My 'St. Anthony' has no morality at all. Sophistry may be expected from the devil, whose object in arguing is to puzzle his adversary. The eclogue was written before Lloyd's 'Lines on the Fast,' and 'Letter to the Anti-jacobin' had reached me; but Satan defends himself exactly upon the same principle that Charles Lloyd defends existing establishments. Lloyd is wasting great talents in crude and hasty productions. He wants to print the play you saw, and in the incorrect state in which you saw it; I have attempted to dissuade, and I hope with success.

"I am looking with some impatience for your life of Bürger. Excepting the two ballads which you translated, his other productions that have been Englished are of no great excellence. The 'Lenore' indeed is enough; it cannot be surpassed, and will not probably be equalled; yet the 'Parson's Daughter' struck me as the finer poem: the story of 'Lenore' once conceived, the execution was not difficult for a man of genius; but the excellence of the other ballad arises wholly from the mode of narration; and

though such a tale might have occurred to a thousand poets, it is a thousand to one that none of them had found out the best way of relating it. Thanks to the number of translators, I no longer hunger and thirst for the language as I did some time since. Prose plays, I apprehend, suffer little from translation. It is only Klopstock that I long to read, and Bodmer's 'Noah,' on account of the subject; but the book is not get-at-able, or I should ere this have poked my way through it with a dictionary.

"My 'Almanack' stands still, in deference to a book of Beddoes on consumption. A clergyman, in consequence of the advertisement, called on Cottle and promised to bring him from a friend some poems which would be 'an ornament to the volume': they have not yet arrived. From Davy I shall have some,—the early productions of genius. He is a miraculous young man, whose talents I can only wonder at. Lloyd, among other things, has sent me a ballad, with unlimited liberty of alteration; it is so full of beauties that I must employ much time in clearing away its faults. I shall throw in one of the unpublished eclogues you saw; I know how those poems generally please. One of my friends wrote, on a first reading, to abuse them; he read them again, and sent me the *amende honorable.*

"Mr. Maurice writes me a good account of Harry. I shall be in London on May-day: if I can find a companion between the terms, I shall take a walk round Kent, or to see the wonders of Derbyshire.

"God bless you!—yours truly,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 9.)

"My dear Friend, "Norwich, May 7, 1799.

"You desired me to send you 'Noah,' but to some address which I have forgotten; I am reduced therefore to the necessity of using that which you furnished me in writing on the 15th of April, a letter I have still to answer. You blame the epithet *dwelling*,—change it to *curious*, or as you please. I first wrote *curious*; but reflecting that this was an abstract term,—that the metaphor had wholly vanished,—that the sensible idea, necessarily latent in all words, is in this wholly forgotten, and that it is consequently become unfit for the poet, whose essence it is to excite sensible images, I translated the term into *dwelling*, that being the sensible action which usually characterizes the eye of curiosity. Besides, chronologers make 1400 years from Moses to Malachi, and this is rather a longer term of poetic culture than Athens or Rome can boast. You observe justly, that the 'Rover's

Apology' does not read well throughout. There is only one line that quite pleases me—

'Bīnd ăgaīn rōse-wrēaths ŏn thy lōcks, ănd myrtlĕ
Scāttĕrĭng ōdōurs.'

"It is impossible to read this otherwise than as it ought to scan. Your sapphics have commonly the fourth syllable short, which I conceive to be wrong; the second foot should be a spondee. Watts's sapphics err in the same particular.

"I hope you project a *rifacciamento* of 'Noah' in English hexameters. The Christian religion offers four grand æras to the Epic poet: two of them, the Creation and the Redemption, are pre-occupied by Milton and Klopstock, poets too good to undergo a refashioning; the Deluge seems to me the best theme of all; the Last Judgement cannot easily be managed with effect and probability until it is over. In the new Jerusalem I expect it will be the favourite enterprise of the sweet singers of Israel; that the Handels and Pergolesis, and other cherubim of sacred song, will set it to music; that the angel Raphael will recite it to the spirits of the patriarchs and to all the pious populace of the pleroma, and the Lackingtons of resurrection be competitors for the first edition of this immortal production. I am told Robarts's 'Judah Restored' is a good poem—is it so?

"The story of the marine on board the Mars is very similar to the fable of Percy's ballad,—

> 'Why is thy sword with blood so red?
> Edward, Edward,'—

to me the most harrowing poem in all the 'Reliques.' Bürger has made a lively ballad of the 'Peasant of Verona saving the toll-gatherer on the bridge of the Adige,' but it will not bear a comparison with the more known ones. A lyric abruptness, a dramatic reality, animates all his narratives.

"I am at present in a state of literary leisure. I cannot go on with my dissertations relative to the history of Cyrus until I receive from Germany some books I want to consult; my reviewing is terminated. I am thinking of a series of inquiries concerning the origin and theory of language, which probably I shall send, as they come forth one by one, to the Monthly Magazine. Perhaps, however, I may read through the story of 'Sir Iwayne,' with the view of making a metrical romance; or, which is far more probable, perhaps I shall translate a metrical romance or two of Wieland's relative to the court of Arthur. I do not say to you, 'Dic mihi quid melius desidiosus agam,' lest you should reply in the word of Horace, 'Quiescas.' Your walk into Kent is not exactly the walk in which I wish myself your fellow-traveller for

any other sake than that of your company. I have been so often in Kent—to Gravesend, and Rochester, and Margate, and on the way to and from Dover and Brighton. If you visit the Peak, we may perhaps meet in the Devil's den, as unexpectedly as in St. Paul's Churchyard, for I am half engaged to accompany an acquaintance in a curricle to Nottingham, whence I shall sally, during his further progress to Boston, into Derbyshire. All this, however, floats as yet in the form of archetypal ideas, and may perhaps never attain the energy of material realization. In Wales I am unwandered, and should like to go some summer's day; my plan would be to reach Hereford or Shrewsbury by the mail, and then walk.

"Your

"WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 10.)

"Bristol, Thursday, May 30th, 1799.

"My dear Friend,

"Thank God, I am at home. In London I was perpetually employed and every day fatigued, yet doing nothing. Burnett left town soon after you. Perhaps you know that he arrived to find his father dying. As soon as he can with propriety leave home, I expect him here. I am anxious to know in what circum-

stances he is left. His father was considered as a wealthy man, and Burnett's share ought to be enough to float him into his new profession; but he had enemies at home, and perhaps the poor old man's property consisted chiefly in land, and he may have made no will. I expect daily to hear of George, or to see him. He loved his father, and the suddenness of his loss must have affected him much.

"I thank you for the Noachide. My grammar and dictionary are now at hand, and give me a very dark-lanthorn sort of glimmer to guide me; however, patience and curiosity will help me through the book. It is nine years since a schoolfellow's account made me desirous of reading it, and luckily the translation has never fallen in my way. The subject is certainly a noble one, as you say, the noblest the Christian system affords, or perhaps any system. If I had leisure, my scattered ideas upon it would soon mould it into a plan. I would take Burnet's philosophy and hunt the Talmuds for rabbinical tradition. Interest enough might be excited for some of the sufferers. You are yet hesitating how to employ yourself. Does not the subject suit you? As for hexameters, to send scattered parties of twenty or fifty or a hundred is useless; they will be cut off: but if we could march an army of five or six thousand into the country,

ably drawn up, they would maintain their ground against all opposition.

" 'Sir Iwayne' is a stranger to me; but I should be better pleased to hear you were employed upon his story than in translating. Translating should be left to inferior hands. The painter who can design, should not waste his labour in copying. The metrical romance ought to be revived, and Arthur's court furnishes variety of subject. I should like to see my prophecy of the 'Chiefs of Carduel' accomplished, still more if it were fulfilled by you.

" Lewis, the Monk-man, is about to publish a compilation of ballads, a superb quarto, I understand, with prints. He has applied to me for some of mine, and to some person who had translated 'Lenore,' and to whom your translation had been attributed; so that instead of yours, he has hampered himself with a very inferior one. I suppose he will get rid of it and request yours.

" I am sorry you did not see the Milton Gallery. Fuseli raised no expectations in me, except of distortion and extravagance. There was something of this—but there was also a sublimity, of which I could scarcely have supposed painting capable. He has doubled the pleasure I derive from Milton. Fuseli has even corrected his author. In the creation of Eve he

has pictured a Demiourgos instead of the Deity, the countenance fixed upon the divine presence charactering the inferior agent. The bridging the abyss, the encounter of Satan and Death, are surprisingly fine. The lazar-house a tremendous picture. I judge of pictures merely by the effect produced on me, without any knowledge of painting. These delighted me for two hours, and I could have sat there all the day. My Almanack must bear date 1800; the printer has been waiting till this time for new types.

"I begin now to think seriously of the 'Dom Daniel.' It should not be in blank verse, because there is danger of too much mannerism after two long poems, and because stanzas are more adapted to luxury or magnificence of description. I would not confine myself to a regular stanza, because I see no advantage from it, and it would often be advantageous to vary the length of the line. In the more dramatic parts I should not scruple to use blank verse.

"My brother is looking for the Brest fleet. Promotion will probably follow him; at least he has the Admiralty's promise. God bless you!

"Yours affectionately,

"Robert Southey."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 10.)

"My dear Friend, "Norwich, June 23, 1799.

"There is nothing like an inheritance for promoting matrimony. According to very credible report, Danae is to marry Agathon at last. You have seen Miss ——; you know George Burnett, and if you have read Wieland's novel—you understand me. A woman may be handsome, very fascinating, a Mrs. Arlberry in the art of seignorizing over men; but ten years in advance as to age is no recommendation ten years after the irrevocable knot is tied. Libertines, when they are about to settle, are mostly great sticklers for feminine purity, or prudery or religiosity. I suppose it equally natural for puritans among the males to be most easily subdued in the first instance by women of a sort of fashionable facility and accessible ease, who worship the artful graces of refinement rather than the simple goddesses of Arcadia. May they be happy, and on reflection I think they will. I might not so have chosen; and yet I believe that such a woman to an Agathon will attach herself with permanent, with unalterable affection,—with a complete conviction that no circumstances can offer to her vanity the chance of a higher conquest; and that if, bee-like, she has buzzed about the petals of gaudier flowers, she has finally settled on the thyme of Hybla.

"Your brother Henry has been here on a visit to his schoolfellow R., whom he accompanied two days ago to Yarmouth, and whom he has now taken leave of on board the Hamburgh packet. We have had an election, in which the anti-jacobin candidate was victorious. I have since been much in the country, and of course wholly idle. Probably I must revisit London in August, and forgo my tour to Nottingham and Derbyshire. I will then see the Milton Gallery, and compare my impressions with yours. A Spenser Gallery should next be undertaken, but by whom? Of Mr. Lewis I have heard nothing, and conclude that he prefers to associate with Spenser's rank and style in poetry.

"You talk of introducing blank verse between the stanzas of your 'Dom Daniel.' You have the authority of Klopstock for such dramatic interventions and for the mutation of metre. Several of his dialogues are managed in alternate lines, like a scene in a Greek tragedy, without any other indication of the speaker than a letter in the margin. Several of his angels sing hymns, especially during the ascension, in Horatian metres. The dialogues have to my taste a bad effect, and the hymns a good one; but there is no inferring a rule of art from a single phænomenon. We judgers have scarcely laid down a general principle, when you geni-

usses amuse yourselves in violating it with effect, on purpose to show that the laws of taste also are only like spiders' webs, and fetter the insects of the region. As you are learning German, I trust you will read Wieland's metrical romances ere you finish 'Dom Daniel.'

"Since I began this, I have received a letter from Burnett; he does not mention his marriage, so that I conclude—and yet no, I do not conclude—it to be fabulous. He talks of sinking what his father has left him, for an annuity. I was amused with the dextrous selfishness with which he had contrived to refuse lending to himself what he had been endeavouring to obtain from his friends, so as to persevere in making his new enterprise their risk and not his own; but as I entirely approve this mode of provision for him, except inasmuch as it tends to foster an indolence from which a sharper degree of want might have aroused him, I shall avoid that sort of comment which sincerity perhaps requires, but which, as it respects a question of the finer feelings, would inflict an unhealable though invisible wound on our relations of intimacy.

"You will have read in the Monthly Magazine my epitome of Stolberg's 'Theseus.' I took most liberty with that part which respects the rape of Ariadne by the bacchanals, and it accordingly reads the worse. But I could con-

trive no other method of stripping the legend of all its supernaturalism, and yet laying the train for all that is fabled of the parties. The resignation of the crown would have lost its value, had anything superhuman been mingled in the story. Theseus now makes, on the whole, a very good king of the croppies, both a religious and a political jacobin.

" I miss reviewing, which is now wholly done with: it ridded me of the necessity of choosing between contending projects of occupation. I have no perseverance and delight in shifting employment. I was glad to find in the same drawer philology and history, poetry and theology, inviting the flea-skips of successive investigation.

" To what Spanish poet is Lessing indebted for the annexed six lines? He gives them as a translation; I suspect their originality.

'Yesterday I loved,
Today I grieve,
Tomorrow I die;
Yet shall I think,
Both today and tomorrow,
Gladly of yesterday.'

I am sorry the editress of Sir W. Jones's works has inserted the French letter to Anquetil du Perron; for the honour of his memory it ought to have perished. In the collection nothing is new to me but the charges to the Calcutta jury,

which display the correct friend to freedom in place and to the last.

" Yours sincerely,

" WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 11.)

" Norwich, August 16, 1799.

" My dear Southey,

" I wrote to you I do not know when, and would fain forget what. Burn my last letter to an irrecollectable ash: it misleads you respecting Burnett, who is certainly not going to be married, whatever appearances, and whatever a family anecdote told me by Mr. Maurice, may have induced me to believe. What is worse, it bears hard on Burnett for talking about buying an annuity, a project suggested by his friend Mr. Poole, the impracticability of which he had not weighed and to which he was faintly attached. Burnett has been here for a day or two and is now gone back to Yarmouth; he is well, and well pleased with his approaching trip to Edinburgh, where he will be able to graduate after two winters, that is, next June twelvemonth. I am learning the Hebrew alphabet. My chronological system about Cyrus and Darius renders it desirable to translate a text or two in the Bible, and I want to know if it can plausibly be done. Whether I shall have the perseverance

to continue my left-handed reading of the cabbalistic squares, until I understand the whole book of Esther, I much doubt. Meanwhile I have attained the inferences, that the feast of Purim is the Magophonia of Darius; the XXXI. Ezekiel an elegy on the death of Cyrus killed by the Massagetæ, and the XIV. Isaiah an elegy on the death of Cambyses, both by the same author, whom, on the ground of internal evidence, I am venturing to separate from among the different prophets, and to call Daniel, and who is, I think, the finest ode-writer in the world. My Daniel is to claim of Ezekiel XXV. to XXXII and XXXV. to XXXIX.; of Jeremiah XLVI. to LI.; and of Isaiah XIII. to XXIII., and XL. to LII., but of this last allotment I am doubtful.

"I have been reading the papers of your friend H. Davy on the metaphysics of chemistry; they are stamped with the seal of vigorous talent and rapid invention. Okely had deified calorique: Davy annihilates it. The very simple and seemingly decisive experiment of the friction of ice, I shall repeat next winter with suspicious attention. True to my darling scepticism, I have long been of opinion that the phænomena of warmth could all be accounted for with *equal* probability,—1. by the hypothesis of a fluid of heat; 2. by a fluid of cold; 3. by fluids of cold and heat; and 4. by mere motion

and rest. It disturbs my repose if any one of the scales be made to preponderate by new arguments, and I instantly set about weighing the opposite one. In like manner the phænomena of combustion, respiration, &c. can with *equal* probability be accounted for,—1. by the hypothesis of phlogiston; 2. by that of a sorbile principle, or oxygen; 3. by that of two principles, oxygen and hydrogen; and 4. by the negation of both principles, employing their component parts, light and kali or azote, as the proper agents of change. The rival partisans of the different possible theories appear to me, like dogmatizing sectaries, not always to wield with equal skill the weapons of controversy; not always to construct their technology with equal philological precision; not always to lay snares for phænomena with a readiness equally inventive, or to syllogize with the same mathematical nudity of language—but always to consider truth both as their pursuit and their possession. You will not wonder therefore if I am not exactly a convert to the doctrines of your friend; but I admire exceedingly the philosophic force and phosphoric brilliance of his genius. Besides, I once drew up three or four papers, which no doubt prejudice me in another direction, on light, electricity, heat and permanent elasticity, in which I urged (from the experiments of

others wholly) that light is an acid, the electric fluid an acid, that both have the same affinities, that heat dislodges or repels them, and they, heat; and that permanent elasticity depends on the possession of fixed light, that is, of the electric fluid. I laid my papers by, in order to make original experiments (which never were made); and now the language, which is of Dr. Franklin's school, is become uncouth for plainness. Perhaps I shall one day have to hellenize the jargon, and instead of 'a painted door-panel, which the fumes had blackened, became white on exposure to the sun's rays,' substitute—'a parallelogram of wood was covered, by means of the expressed oil of the *Linum vulgare* of Linnæus, with an exceedingly thin coating of oxyd of lead, and so frequently exposed to an atmosphere of ammoniacal gas, as to revivify a whole surface of metal. In this state it was submitted to the action of the sun's rays and became oxydated anew.' Yet I think the French philosophers have introduced a deal too much of this quackery of phrase, this esoteric style, so ridiculously mimicked in Palmer's 'Heliography.'

"By Browne's 'Travels in Ægypt' I have been much instructed. I never understood before what were the provocations and reliances of the French, when they sent Bonaparte, like a new

Cambyses, to accomplish this fruitless conquest and to perish.

" Have you seen Pougens on Northern Antiquities? Dr. Griffiths, who is not quite reconciled to my separating from the Monthly Review, has been soliciting me to overlook it, which I have declined. I expect nothing very good on this subject from Paris, yet I should like to know if it be worth buying. I am going to listen for a week to the shore-annoying billows, in company with Robert Woodhouse, the Cambridge mathematician, a Newton who has not yet burst his shell. He writes those admirable mathematical articles in the Monthly Review.

" Yours,

" WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 11.)

" My dear Friend,

" * * * By this you must have received the 'Annual Anthology,' unless Cottle has been more remiss than usual. You will find all your pieces there except the Sapphics; these I meant to have returned you with some proffered smoothifications, but found no leisure, so they lie over. My own pieces you will probably discover under the anagrams Erthusyo and Theoderit, sundry alphabetical signatures, and no signatures at all. The volume has cork enough to float its lead;

it wants a piece or two of more respectable length, and there is a lack of epigrams altogether. Both these deficiencies will be guarded against in the next volume, which I hope to have ready for publication in January. There is a want also of lyrical poems. Your 'Topographical Ode' stands alone. Excepting that and 'The Seas,' and some of my own inscriptions, the serious pieces are very inferior to those of a lighter cast. Should you have recognized my hand in the amorous effusions of 'Abel Shufflebottom'?

"'The 'Dom Daniel' I have begun, and run the first heat of my course. A book and half are done, and in the irregular blank verse, which I have ever had a hankering after since I first fed upon Dr. Sayers' 'Sketches.' I shall defend my choice with arguments unanswerable, to my conception. If I succeed in the remainder of the poem equally well, the metre will, I think, become popular, and involve me in the guilt of begetting numberless imitators.

" Davy is an extraordinary young man, and much may be expected from him. You will see by his poems (they are signed D.) germs of genius and powers likely to lead their possessor to eminence, however directed. They were written when he was very young—indeed he is now but just one-and-twenty. You have probably

heard from Burnett an account of his most wonderful discovery, the wonder-working gaseous oxyd of azote,—for it is not yet christened, and the old name must be used. I am affected by a smaller quantity than any person who has yet taken it. It produces first in me an involuntary and idiotic laughter, highly pleasurable and ridiculous; immediately a warmth and a fullness flow from my head through every limb, and my finger- and toe-tips tingle, and my teeth seem to vibrate with delight. The last symptom is a feeling of strength, and an impulse to exert every muscle. For the remainder of the day it left me with increased hilarity, and with my hearing, taste and smell certainly more acute. I conceive this gas to be the atmosphere of Mohammed's Paradise."

"Sept. 1st, 1799, Ottery St. Mary, Devonshire.

"This letter has been unfinished while I have been rambling over this country,—a country which appears to me to have received more encomiums than it deserves. After coming from the north of Somersetshire everything appears flat and uninteresting. I am about to house myself at Exeter for a few weeks, till our habitation in Hampshire be vacant. * * * With my own employment and the vicinity of Coleridge, the want of society is not to be felt. I

was to tell you from Coleridge, that a statue of Bürger has been lately erected in some tea-gardens at Göttingen, badly designed and executed, and in a strange place; but it shows his popularity. If this be worth mentioning in your necrology, and not too late, I will get for you the description of the monument, which has escaped my memory. Coleridge is about to produce the life of Lessing, a subject which will comprehend the literary history of Germany.

"I am sorry you have abdicated the office of literary Director, for the Republic has need of your services. A good reviewer is the rarest of writers; for unless he have leisure and inclination, the ablest hands scrawl through it sadly. I have a sort of selfish sorrow too; for Coleridge and I mean to march an army of hexameters into the country, and it will be unfortunate to have all the strong places in the hands of our enemies. We have chosen the story of Mohammed. N.B.—No reflection on Klopstock. The subject is very fine, and we have squeezed it into a sufficient oneness. But remember this is a secret expedition, till the manifesto accompany the troops. We must bully like generals, but argue somewhat better. Gather me at your leisure a few flowers for the 'Anthology.' God bless you! "Yours truly,

"Robert Southey."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 12.)

" Dear Friend, " Norwich, 18th October, 1799.

" The 'Annual Anthology' was duly received. There is barely cork enough to float the lead, or barely lead enough to make the scum and scoria saleable. Lovell's two sonnets are good; so are the 'Goose' and the 'Gooseberry-bush.' Are these last by Coleridge? I have been less pleased than you with the verses signed D. Except the 'Song of Pleasure,' which is brilliant, and a passage here and there, I have not enjoyed them. I discover not those powers of fancy, those inventive capacities, those creative energies, those almightinesses of plastic genius, which because you know the man, and because everybody knows him for a first-rate philosopher, *you* are unavoidably led to associate even with his poetical exertions. I did not recognize you in 'Abel Shufflebottom.' In these elegies the first is most effective, yet it is rather too long. The third and perhaps the fourth stanzas might be spared, and again the eighth, which in fact repeats the contiguous one. Accurst, curst, accursed, cursed, occur cursedly currently, as a cursory perusal will convince you. Your ballads of 'Bishop Bruno,' 'Cornelius Agrippa,' 'Saint Reyné's Well,' and the 'Pious Painter,' are all lively, striking, and well told. Many of the comic pieces are comical. I rejoice, how-

ever, that you adopt the method of publishing anonymously your smaller effusions, as it is certainly most for your reputation to associate your name only with the selecter compositions, and to let those of uncertain value be afterwards concentrated, rendered stimulant by withdrawing the water of deliquescence, be alcoholized, and have their aroma distilled into a quintessential drop of otr. If there be a poetical sin in which you are apt to indulge, it is expatiation, an Odyssey garrulity, as if you were ambitious of exhausting a topic, instead of selecting its more impressive outlines only. In a metrical romance this is probably no evil—some feeble intervals increase the effect of the interstitial splendour; but in the poemets of an Anthology there is no space for oscillation, no leisure to flag.

"I am obliged by Mr. Coleridge's intimation concerning the statue of Bürger, although it came too late for my use. The manuscript was already sent to Philips for the 'Necrology,' and mentioned an intended monument in the gardens at Göttingen, of which the inscription was not given in the document I followed. I shall be gratified by a communication of the inscription, if it can be come at without much trouble to you or your friend. His life of Lessing may well be made as interesting as Warton on the Genius and Writings of Pope, and is, I presume,

to be treated in the same all-embracing manner. Dr. Parr and Mackintosh have been in Norwich—

> 'Ceu duo nubigenæ, quum vertice montis ab alto
> Descendunt Centauri.'

"They are both very dazzling men. One scarcely knows whether to admire most the oracular significance and compact rotundity of the single sentences of Parr, or the easy flow and glittering expansion of the unwearied and unwearying eloquence of Mackintosh. Parr's far-darting hyperboles and gorgeous tropes array the fragments of his conversation in the gaudiest trim. Mackintosh's cohesion of idea and clearness of intellect give to his sweeps of discussion a more instructive importance. Parr has the manners of a pedant, Mackintosh of a gentleman. Of course people in general look up to Parr with awe, and feel esteem for him rather than love, while Mackintosh conciliates and fascinates. In this feeling I do not coincide with others wholly. There is a lovingness of heart about Parr, a susceptibility of the affections, which would endear him even without his Greek. But admiration is, if I mistake not, yet more gratifying to Mackintosh than attachment; to personal partialities he inclines less. His opinions are sensibly aristocratized since the publication of his 'Vindiciæ;' but they retain a grandeur of outline, and are approaching the

manner of the constitutional school. Mackintosh's memory is well stored with fine passages, Latin and English, which he repeats, and his taste in poetry inclines to metrical philosophy rather than pathos or fancy. Milton, Dryden and Pope have alone sufficient good sense to please him. Virgil he overrates, I think, and Cicero too. Style and again style is the topic of his praise. Careless writing, redolent of mind, is better than all the varnish of composition, merely artful. I was surprised to find him agree with the French in thinking Bossuet very eloquent; and still more so at his rating so very high the panegyric mysticism of Bishop Jeremy Taylor. There are indeed exquisite, more than platonically beauteous passages, but they are scattered thinly, like the apparitions of angels in pious story.

"You ask me for more contributions to your impending second 'Anthology.' I have only several political odes, which are mostly past date and too bold for now; and a half-drama after the manner of Chatterton, which is too long and unintelligible. I will however send you something, even if I write it for the purpose.

"Yours,

"William Taylor, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 12.)

" Burton, Tuesday, Oct. 22, 1799.

" It is one among the many disadvantages of being without a local habitation, to be without a direction. A rambler is half forgotten by his friends, because they know not where to remember him. We are now revolutionizing two adjoining hovels into a dwelling-house, one and indivisible, and in the course of another ten days I shall be settled with my books about me. My direction is Burton, near Ringwood, Hampshire. Our situation, two miles from the verge of the New Forest and one and a half from the sea. The Needles and the southern and western rocks of the Isle of Wight rise opposite our shore at the distance of nine miles. I should like to show you the country, and if summer and autumn are not dead, but only missing, like half the poor soldiers in Holland, there is perhaps enough to repay you, in a better season, for the journey. We are just a hundred miles from London.

" I am finishing the fourth book of my Dom Daniel romance: the plan of the remainder is matured; my head full of eastern scenery, and I look to speedily conclude it. Have you seen a poem called 'Gebir'? It appears to me the miraculous work of a madman. Its intelligible passages are flashes of lightning at midnight.

Like a picture in whose obscure colouring no plan is discoverable, but in every distinct touch you see the master-hand. * * * *

" There is a paper in one of the late Monthly Magazines which I half believe to be yours, and half disbelieve its contradictory evidence—upon modern Jesuitism: I miss you in the Review. The Critical is so miserably bad, that indolently as I write myself, I am almost ashamed to be in such company. I am arranging my materials for the second 'Anthology.' The first has crept into the world silently—perfectly still-born. The home-sale at Bristol has been extensive, and the book, where it is known, sufficiently popular. The Reviews may perhaps do something for it, and the second volume will do more. As yet I have no stranger-communication, but in the little world of poetry my acquaintance is by no means confined. I have one or two pieces of greater length than any in the first volume, but nothing to equal your 'Topographical Ode;' that stands, and must stand, alone. Did you receive the first volume? I have just got the Zend-Avesta, but have not yet advanced further than the preliminaries. The merits of Anquetil Du Perron, I am told, have been underrated by Richardson and Sir William Jones. He is not answerable for the nonsense of the book. I procured it with the remote

view of making Mango Capac the hero of a poem, and bringing him from among the followers of Zoroaster flying from Mohammedan persecution. A more immediate motive was to gratify old curiosity. Some assistance I may perhaps derive for Thalaba, my Dom Daniel destroyer; and among the many little pieces that I needs must write, it is my intention to write sketches characteristic of the manners and mythologies of different nations. Some of these, relative to the American Indians, you may possibly have seen in the Morning Post.

"Browne's Travels disappointed me. That a man should go so far and see so little! And in the Critical there is the puff superlative upon his meagre narrative. Park interested me far more. These African adventurers seem to go foolishly to work; circumcision would save half their dangers. After all, the probability is that Africa will be chiefly explored from the English Cape of Good Hope and from French Egypt.

* * * *

"A little practice has enabled me to hexametrize with facility: in my next I will send you a specimen. God bless you!

"Yours truly,

"Robert Southey."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 13.)

"Burton, Oct. 27, 1799.

"You give me a more favourable account of Mackintosh than I have been accustomed to receive. Coleridge has seen much of him at the Wedgewoods'. He describes him as acute in argument, more skilful in detecting the logical errors of his adversary than in propounding truth himself,—a man accustomed to the gladiatorship of conversation—a literary fencer, who parries better than he thrusts. I suspect that in praising Jeremy Taylor and in overrating him, he talks after Coleridge, who is a heathen in literature and ranks the old bishop among his demigods. I am not enough conversant with his writings to judge how accurately you appreciate him. The 'Holy Living and Dying' everybody knows, and it has splendid parts. His 'Ductor Dubitantium' I procured just before my departure from Bristol, and it lies in my unopened baggage. What Coleridge values in these old writers is their structure of paragraph; where sentence is built upon sentence with architectural regularity, each resting upon the other, like the geometrical stairs at St. Paul's.

"In Davy's verses I see aspirations after genius and powers of language, all that can be expected in so young a writer. Did I promise more? But it is my common fault usually to

overrate whatever I am newly acquainted with. Towards the close of the 'Sons of Genius' there are some fine stanzas, but as a whole it is tedious and feeble — but it was the production of eighteen. Davy is a surprising young man, and one who by his unassumingness, his open warmth of character and his all-promising talents, soon conciliates our affections. He writes me that two paralytic patients have been cured by the gaseous oxyd of azote—the beatific gas, for discovering which, if he had lived in the time of the old Persian kings, he would have received the reward proposed for the inventing a new pleasure. The 'Goose' and 'Gooseberry-bush' are mine. Perhaps it is the consciousness of a garrulous tendency in writing that impels me with such decided and almost exclusive choice to narrative poetry. The books of the 'Italia Liberata' which I read at Norwich did me more service towards correcting this fault than any other lesson could have done. In 'Madoc' I think I have avoided it. Sometimes too it is serviceable, wherever there are passages of prominent merit. There should be a plain around the pyramids. As a poet, I consider myself as out of my apprenticeship and having learnt the command of my tools. If I live, I may, and believe I shall, make a good workman; but at present I am only a promising one. It is an unfavourable

circumstance that my writings are only subjected to the criticisms of those persons whose tastes are in a great measure formed upon mine, and who are prepared to admire whatever I may write. I have now extracted the kernel of the Zend-Avesta. The outline of the mythology is fine, and well adapted for poetry, because the system is comprehensible. How the Hindoo fables could ever appear poetical to Sir William Jones, is to me inconceivable: their intricacy unfits them. Much as the ground has been travelled over, I doubt whether any one could trace the outline of a map. The Edda is the most magnificent of all these systems, if indeed it ever was more than a poet's creed. I will one day graft a story upon it, to contrast with the oriental picture in Thalaba.

" My frequent movements have hitherto prevented me from attacking the ' Noachide.' Dictionaries would have swoln my travelling package too much. Now, however, I will force my way through, and endeavour soon to return you a book which I have already detained too long. In passing through Dorchester I visited Gilbert Wakefield, whom I found in good health and spirits, and probably Massena has improved his spirits since. In politics he seemed to have the comfortable faith of an optimist. For myself, I have the longing after peace which you may

imagine an invalid feels who wants to visit the south of France and Italy. The bell ringing for peace should be the signal for my departure. Burnett I suppose is gone for Edinburgh. God bless you,—yours affectionately,

" Robert Southey."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 13.)

" Norwich, November 1st, 1799.

" My dear Friend,

" Your imagination, I perceive, like my own, is apt to busy itself with inventing adventures and situations for the objects with which it is occupied, and is sometimes doomed of course to see the bubbles of its apprehensions burst. But you happily confine yourself to epic romance; I unfortunately sometimes wander into the regions of moral romance, and impute springs of motive and plans of conduct which do injustice to my heroes. When I return from empusaland to reality, I hope I atone to them for my demonizations; but the foible I have, and I would have you know it, that if needs be you may lecture me against it.

" The paper on modern Jesuitism your suspicion ascribes justly. I want to know what you call the contradictory evidence. Is it the amazing absurdity of the thing itself? But this will diminish with inquiry. Is it the phrase,

'Order is no doubt of more value than liberty'? Surely the chief value of liberty consists in its being the most permanent pledge and security for order. Is it 'the justly offensive phænomena'? There are, however, phænomena of the French Revolution justly offensive; and to no other do I ascribe the revulsion of opinion. Finally, is it the oath by Sir Sidney Smith? You are no doubt aware that he saved Sweden from the Russians. The more you reconsider the tendency of this paper, the more you will be convinced, that it favours precisely that separation of the literary sects which is most comprehensive for the friends of change, and consequently most favourable to their efficience and popularity. I desire you will criticise with all the severity I use toward you. I am always more obliged by censure than commendation, because I know I want, and desire to attain, improvement. Besides, I can always find out all and more than all the merit other people see in what I write.

"I shall not come and visit you at Burton before next summer, if then. I do not know that it will be convenient to my finances, as I abhor to exceed my income, and having left off reviewing, shall suffer a fifty-pound defalcation at least. My ten shares in the Huddersfield canal are nearly washed away by the floods, and

will be an expense to me for some time. Our losses in America have swept away a good half of what I had earned by honest industry in trade; and I can only buffet my father's wish to re-engage me in profitable pursuits, by making my own hoard suffice. Since the expense for education ceased, I have never had a guinea from my family in any other form than share of board; and I wish never to make any requests, which should constitute an obligation on my part to attend to prudential advice about accepting this or that offer of partnership in a banker's or merchant's counting-house. My uniform answer is—What more do I want? Yet I often satirize myself for taking so much pains to guard an independence and free-agency which I squander in so purposeless an idleness.

"Of 'Gebir' I have only read the extracts in the Critical, and thence attributed it to Wordsworth. I am waiting its arrival in the here Public Library, to read it. You recollect Mr. John Taylor, J. Pitchford, Jun., and Bartlett Gurney, our parliamentary candidate; these and three other persons of similar very high respectability were excluded from the Library Committee at the last general meeting by a cabal of Antijacobins, who had given each other the watchword to attend and oppose every person of democratic principles, or suspected of such.

"I long for a page of your hexameters. Send me as many as you have patience to transcribe. What I have picked up from authority or experience concerning the theory of this sort of verse, you will find in the Monthly Magazine for May 1797, page 337. My laws are these:—1. The feet should be interwoven, not co-extensive with the words. 2. The verse should not split into two, like halves. 3. The cæsura, or rest, falling on the fifth half-foot, this is the fittest place for a pause. 4. Polysyllabic comparatives and syllabic genitives, being convenient, should be revived. I ought to have added, that the difficulty of attaining frequent spondees, and the condensation of sense which mostly accompanies their occurrence, ought to entitle very spondaic lines to a preference over trochaic and dactylic lines. Do you admit epigrams into the 'Anthology'? By the bye, if you print errata to the 'Anthology' (a very neat copy of which I received), change the word '*line* the lightning with impurpled flame,' to *tine*, which is what I meant to write.

"I am glad your Mango Capac is to be a follower of Zoroaster. All the words of the language of the Incas preserved by Garcilasso de la Vega are *Malay*, which decides his Asian origin. Mango Capac means a man with an axe: Oello, a snake, &c. I was afraid you meant him for

a Welchman of Madoc's company. Some Dane has proved him an Icelander.

" Yours attachedly,

" WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 14.)

" Kingsdown Parade, Bristol,
Sunday, Dec. 8th, 1799.

" My dear Friend,

" Do not from my long silence suspect me of negligence. I have been ill—so reduced by a nervous fever as neither to read nor write. On recovery I repaired to Bristol, to seek relief for a worse complaint. My heart is affected, nervously I *hope*; but pain there, and frequent irregularity in pulsation, convinced me that I ought not to delay obtaining able advice.

" My hexameters come to you in a ragged state. I meant to have corrected them with care; but as they are, they may serve as a specimen of what I can do in this way, and it would be foolish to wait till I have leisure for correcting. These liberties I have allowed myself—sometimes a superfluous short syllable at the beginning—sometimes the pyrrhic—sometimes the amphimacer. These licences must of course be sparing; and what you will meet with would probably have been altered in correction.

[Here follow 109 hexameter lines from the in-

tended poem on Mohammed, mentioned in the letter of the 1st September.]

" Remember, these are apprenticeship lines; but I think that now I can wield the metre, and that it makes a magnificent mouthful of sound.

" Thank you for your offer to house Harry; we however wish once more to see him, and not quite to abandon him in a land of strangers. I wish he were old enough to be placed as pupil at the wonder-working Pneumatic Institution. You visited Bristol too soon, before our luminary had arisen. Davy is a miraculous young man, but his health is injured. Beddoes even apprehends consumption. At present he is in London, and when he returns I hope my residence here will draw him a little from perpetual experiments and the noisome fumes of the laboratory.

" Don't be daunted by the nonsense and unintelligibility of 'Gebir' from going through it; it looked to me like a Norwich-printed book, but that you would have known. Your townsman's 'Cupid and Psyche' is well done. Where can I find a sketch of the idolatry of the Poles? I want to make an ode on the sacrifice of their Queen Venda.

" Yours affectionately,

" Robert Southey."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 14.)

" My dear Friend, " December, 1799.

" I was sorry to hear from Mr. Maurice that you are again ill. If health, like the good works of the monks, were a transferable commodity, I would give you some of mine, and incur for your sake many weeks of confinement. As things are, I can only wish you well, and add that I have no confidence in your system of extreme temperance, which produces a valetudinarian, disagreeable health, and by never calling into full action the vessels which secrete sensorial power, occasions their shrivelling into impotence before the natural period.

" Thanks for your hexameters. I was never before an impartial judge of their practicability in English, having read only my own. I of course associated much of the pleasure of composition with their rhythm, and derived from them a delight which it would be absurd to suppose transferable. I am now satisfied that they will do, but not do wonders. They are less favourable to condensation of thought, and consequently to the highest stimulancy of style, than blank verse. They do abound, as Mr. Böttiger observes, more than ordinary poetry, with *of this* and *to this*. They do not often attain a certain majesty of soundingness, which is frequent in the Latin hexameter. Superfluous short syllables

at the beginnings of lines would to my ear have a still better effect, if the preceding line terminated with a long syllable; *e. g.*

. . . . . ' even the play of his pulse
Disturbs him, so deep his attention.'

" I observe you are not solicitous to avoid a structure of line which Klopstock blames as offensive to the ear, because it suggests the idea of a poem written in semi-hexameters, when a dactyl and spondee occur for the second and third foot, as—' garment of green, who '—' inaudible words he '—' manner of men await,' &c. Some of the most dactylic lines have an admirable effect.

. . . . . ' Beneath the hoofs of their horses
Sparkles the rock of the valley and rises the dust of the desert.'

So has a very emphatic incipient syllable,

' There is a third, aloud replied the son of Abdallah;
God '—

On the other hand I should prefer—

' Lo the pigeon fled . . . . . .
Spread is the spider's net-work over the entrance,'

to the supernumerary incipient syllable. *Sounds that rŭng* makes a bad dactyl, nor should we read *wăs thў spirit* as if the two first syllables were short.

" I forget who told me that the ' Anthology ' was not to come out before April, and even that

its continuation was doubtful. I have however completed, with the intention of offering it to you, the English eclogue of which, when here, you transcribed the three or four first lines. The hexameters must excuse the too long description of the view of Paris. If you do not want it for the 'Anthology,' return it to me, as I will in that case send it to the Monthly Magazine. I began a terrific ballad for you on the story of Dr. Faustus, and composed forty or fifty stanzas, but found on a sudden that the catastrophe was so hacknied and the beginning so expectation-exciting, that it would form an anti-climax perfectly ridiculous. Your friend Coleridge wrote to me a few days ago, to ask about the Norwich riots. I told him all I knew, which was very little. I wrote to him for Bürger's epitaph, which he did not possess; and I have obtained his address, of which, when I go to London, I shall avail myself to make his acquaintance.

"Yours,

"William Taylor, Jun."

The eclogue transmitted in this letter is that entitled 'The Show,' inserted at page 200 of the second volume of the 'Anthology.' It appears from the foregoing correspondence that the following are the contributions from William Taylor's pen to the first volume of that work:—

Page 1. The Topographical Ode (to Keswick Lake), with the signature of Ryalto.

Page 36. A Dirge.

Page 64. Ode to the Burnie Bee ; signed R. O.

Page 201. Ode to the Rainbow ; also signed R. O.

Page 205. Parody on Lines written in the Sixteenth Century.

Page 233. The Seas ; signed Ryalto.

To the first of these compositions the editor deservedly assigned the post of honour, in the van of the collection ; and he has expressed his sense of its excellence in terms, which would give to further comments the character of an obtrusive pedantry.

CHAPTER VI.

1800 to 1801.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH ROBERT SOUTHEY CONTINUED.

The freedom with which William Taylor, in these letters as on other occasions, allowed his 'darling scepticism' to range at large, will of course offend those, who hold easy conviction and acquiescent faith to be the highest and most meritorious employment of the faculties of man; but before they condemn too severely this proneness to speculation, let them consider well the other qualities of the head and of the heart with which they here behold it associated; let them observe, as here exhibited in all unaffected and unostentatious simplicity, the generous promptings of a pure benevolence, the versatile play of a sportive imagination, and the far-reaching inquiries of an active mind. Researches originated and conducted in such a spirit can tend only to good, in whatever terms they may be denounced by the timid and the alarmed. Submissive assent to prescribed opinions is despised even by those who exact it; for they know that it proceeds from weakness, indolence or hypocrisy. We have been taught, on the other hand,

on no mean authority, to "respect the doubts of a great mind;" and although this was said in reference only to one line of ratiocination, it is equally applicable to all. Doubts are the aspirations of strong intellect after truth, and such were those of William Taylor; for even in his most eccentric moods, and when seeming to grasp only at the palm of victorious argument, if he did not himself propound veritable principles, he was directing others where to seek them. Candour demands that he be thus judged: if wrong, convict him of error by calm reasoning; this cannot be accomplished by abuse and obloquy. Those who oppose to inquiry the clamours of excited fanaticism, may well be suspected of knowing that their cause is weak, and of advocating it only as a means of securing to themselves power or profit.

It does not appear, however, that the freedom of William Taylor's discussions excited any ill-feeling towards him at that period of his life which is now under our consideration; but he was then thought to be rich, and a man of reputed wealth may entertain opinions, for which a poorer man will be called severely to account at the bar of intolerance. At least it is certain that William Taylor experienced something of this, when in after years his circumstances were no longer so affluent as in the earlier part of his career. Still those who knew

him best, appreciated the motives of his curiosity, and were satisfied that they comported with the utmost kindness of heart and the highest rectitude of principle. The manifestation of these qualities in the unreserved confidence of his epistolary intercourse with Robert Southey may now make him better known to others; and when they see how the distinguished individual to whom these letters were addressed preserved to the last his friendship for the writer, it will be well if they participate, however faintly, in those feelings which kept alive his esteem and regard, undiminished by the avowal of opinions so adverse to those which he has recorded in his own published works. During the latter years of William Taylor's life, Robert Southey was one day dining at his table; it was the last time, I believe, that they ever met; after dinner the host made many attempts to engage his guest in some theological argument, which the latter parried for some time very good-humouredly, and at last put an end to them by exclaiming, "Taylor, come and see me at Keswick. We will ascend Skiddaw, where I shall have you nearer heaven, and we will then discuss such questions as these."

Of the correspondence with Coleridge, mentioned in the preceding pages, the following is the only letter now extant.

S. T. Coleridge to William Taylor.

" London, January 25th, 1800.

" My dear Sir,

" I thank you for your kind attention to my letter. That ' extract of a letter from Norwich ' was given in to the Morning Post by Sheridan himself, who *knew* the whole account to be a tissue of atrocious falsehoods. Jacobinism evinces a gross and unthinking spirit; but the Jacobins as men are heroes in virtue, compared with Mr. Fox and his party. I know enough of them to know, that more profligate and unprincipled men never disgraced an honest cause. Robert Southey was mistaken—it was merely an account in a letter from Göttingen of a ridiculous statue. I will transcribe the passage. ' A statue has lately been put up in Ulric's garden in honour of Bürger the poet. It represents the Genius of Germany weeping over an urn. The Genius, instead of being eight faces high, is only five; nor is there anything superhuman about it, except perhaps its position, in which it is impossible for man, woman or child to stand. But notwithstanding all this, you must own, there is something very sylvanly romantic in seeing the monument of a great poet put up in the garden of an alehouse.' If I were in time to get a frank, here I should conclude; but I cannot endure to make you pay postage

for half a sheet of almost vacant paper. I will transcribe therefore a passage or two from some letters which passed between me and Wordsworth in Germany (I should say from Wordsworth, for I have no copies of my own) respecting the merits of Bürger.

"'We have read 'Leonora' and a few little things of Bürger; but upon the whole we were disappointed, particularly in 'Leonora,' which we thought in several passages inferior to the English translation. '*Wie donnerten die Brücken*,' —how inferior to

> 'The bridges thunder as they pass,
> But earthly sound was none, &c., &c.'

"I admitted in my reply, that there are more passages of poetry in your translation, but affirmed that it wanted the *rapidity* and *oneness* of the original and that in the beauty quoted the idea was so striking, that it made me *pause*, *stand still* and *look*, when I ought to have been driving on with the horse. Your choice of metre I thought unfortunate, and that you had lost the spirit of quotation from the Psalm-book, which gives such dramatic spirit and feeling to the dialogue between the mother and daughter, &c., &c.

"*Answer.*—'As to Bürger, I am yet far from that admiration of him which he has excited in you; but I am by nature slow to admire; and I am not yet sufficiently master of the language to

understand him perfectly. In one point I entirely coincide with you, in your feeling concerning his versification. In 'Lenore' the concluding double rhymes of the stanza have both a delicious and *pathetic* effect—

> 'Ach! aber für Lenoren
> War Gruss und Kuss verloren.'

I accede too to your opinion that Bürger is always the poet; he is never the mobbist, one of those dim drivellers with which our island has teemed for so many years. Bürger is one of those authors whose book I like to have in my hand, but when I have laid the book down I do not think about him. I remember a hurry of pleasure, but I have few distinct forms that people my mind, nor any recollection of delicate or minute feelings which he has either communicated to me, or taught me to recognise. I do not perceive the presence of character in his personages. I see everywhere the character of Bürger himself; and even this, I agree with you, is no mean merit. But yet I wish him sometimes at least to make me forget himself in his creations. It seems to me, that in poems descriptive of human nature, however short they may be, character is absolutely necessary, &c.: incidents are among the lowest allurements of poetry. Take from Bürger's poems the *incidents*, which are seldom or ever of his own in-

vention, and still much will remain; there will remain a manner of relating which is almost always spirited and lively, and stamped and peculiarized with genius. Still I do not find those higher beauties which can entitle him to the name of a *great* poet. I have read 'Susan's Dream,' and I agree with you that it is the most perfect and Shaksperian of his poems, &c., &c. Bürger is the poet of the animal spirits. I love his '*Tra ra la*' dearly; but less of the horn and more of the lute—and far, far more of the pencil.'

"So much of my dear friend Wordsworth. Our controversy was continued, not that I thought Bürger a great poet, but that he really possessed some of the excellences which W. denied to him; and at last we ended in metaphysical disquisitions on the nature of character, &c., &c. My dear Sir, I feel a kind of conviction that one time or other we shall meet. Should choice or chance lead you to London, I have house-room for you, and, as far as loving some who dearly love you may entitle me to say so, heart-room too. I meet here a number of people who say, unconscious that they are lying, that they know you—for a regiment of whom neither you nor I care twopence.

"Yours with unfeigned esteem,

"S. T. Coleridge."

We now resume our extracts from the correspondence with Robert Southey.

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 15.)

"My dear Friend," "Feb. 3rd, 1800.

"I thank you for your eclogue. With the beginning I have often been pleased, and the remainder pleases me not less. Some lines will not scan: 'Men who against kings,' &c., is a foot short; 'Surely the dome of the Invalides,' a foot too long; and 'We poor Jews when it went,' has the same fault. I have scanned these lines so often as to be satisfied the error is not in my toning. In hexameters of a loftier tone I should object to the placing a word like '*batter*' at the end of one line and the '*down*' at the beginning of the next, as it is almost splitting a word; but in this place the effect is rather good than otherwise. I think you estimate rightly the power of the metre; perhaps no other is so well adapted for the sort of domestic poetry, if the term be understandable, in which, I believe, Voss has written his 'Louise.' I have sometimes thought 'Mohammed' too high a subject for the metre, and Robin Hood a better hero for a hexametrical poem. The second 'Anthology' is very far advanced, eleven sheets being printed; the sooner therefore you send me the correction

of the halting lines the better. You asked me in a former letter, and I forgot to answer the question, if epigrams were admissible:—everything except translations; and I reserve the few epigrams already collected to go together near the end of the book.

"Harry is much improved in manner and in mind since my visit to Yarmouth. I am, however, uneasy lest he should contract habits of expensiveness, of which it will be difficult to divest himself, and which, if indulged, must be subversive of independence; my attempts to correct this are rather by example than by precept. You have considerable influence over him, and I say this to you that you may bear in mind his failing and his danger; make but independence his pride, and he will do well. You will perhaps smile to hear, that the first book that ever seriously influenced my opinions and my conduct was the 'Manual' of Epictetus. Harry is very quick; he has talent enough, if well directed, to render himself useful and respectable; the marks of genius are not, I think, to be found in him. Do you approve the plan of sending him to a German university, after previous studies, chemical and anatomical, in England?

"I am seriously thinking of quitting England in search of health; either to wait till autumn and then visit Lisbon, or to employ the summer

in travelling through Vienna to Trieste. Something I must do, lest habits of sickliness affect my mind as well as body. I use stimulants enough, from porter to the gaseous oxyd, and certainly am better for them,—indeed, unable to do without them. My employments are perforce contracted. I have given up rhyming, a guinea's worth a week, for the Morning Post; it was become an oppression which harassed me. With 'Thalaba' I proceed leisurely, and therefore it is a pleasure and relief. Eight books are written, to my own mind, well; when it is completed I will send you the manuscript.

"To return to the hexameters. The structure which Klopstock disapproves is to my ear only then unpleasant when a pause in the sense makes it perceptible, and then it is equally offensive in any of the first four feet. I recollect but one instance in the fragment of 'Mohammed,' 'Disturbs him, so deep his attention'; the pause breaks the dactyl into a trochee. You are right, I think, in recommending the long syllable ending to precede the superfluous beginning one of the next line, and this liberty seems unavoidable. I meant it to be read, 'Wăs thȳ spĭrĭt,' the 'soūnds thăt rūng'—make a licentious foot,—an amphimacer; and for these anomalies a preface must plead excuse and demand acquittal. I sent you all that I have written,

and you must not forget that they are the apprenticeship verses. It is evident that their perceptible harmony is obtained by no forced accent or unnatural construction of language. They would very soon become to me as easy and as wieldable as blank verse; and when 'Thalaba' is finished, I shall certainly give them the trial of a long and important poem. Whether Mohammed be a hero likely to blast a poem in a Christian country is doubtful; my Mohammed will be, what I believe the Arabian was in the beginning of his career, sincere in enthusiasm; and it would puzzle a casuist to distinguish between the belief of inspiration and the actual impulse. From Coleridge I am promised the half, and we divided the books according as their subjects suited us, but I expect to have nearly the whole work. His ardour is not lasting; and the only inconvenience that his dereliction can occasion will be, that I shall write the poem in fragments and have to seam them together at last. The action ends with the capture of Mecca; the mob of his wives are kept out of sight, and only Mary, the Egyptian, introduced. Ali is, of course, my hero; and if you will recollect the prominent characters of Omar and Abubeker and Hamza, you will see variety enough. Among the Koreish are Amron and Caled. From Maracci's curious prole-

gomena to his refutation of the Koran I have collected many obscure facts for the narrative; still, however, though the plan is well formed and interesting, I fear it would not give the hexameters a fair chance. A more popular story, and one requiring not the elevation of thought and language which this demands, would probably succeed better,—a sort of pastoral epic, which is one of my boy-plans yet unexecuted. There is no need to make enemies to the poem, when the metre will have so many. Give me your judgement upon this point, which it is almost time to decide, for a few weeks will finish 'Thalaba.' I should have been glad of your 'Dr. Faustus.' In general these Beelzebub stories require a mixture of the ludicrous with the terrific, which it is difficult, if possible, to avoid. I have been reprehended for writing such tales, because they encouraged superstition: —an idle remark; for surely making free with the devil is not the way to preserve his respectability.

"You probably learnt from Coleridge's letter the rascally conduct of Sheridan about your Norwich riots. At Bristol we have always something new in the way of chemical experiment. Davy has been very busy in examining the effects of the different gases in respiration, and the oxygen-mania must, I think, be ex-

ploded by them. He has ascertained that, in breathing pure oxygen, less oxygen is absorbed than in breathing common air. I wish you knew this young man. I never saw one who promised so much,—who possessed so completely the powers which make a great man.

"Another campaign, and another expedition! Amen, so be it! and if bleeding be a cure for phrenzy, I think this promises to make the people of England sane.

"Farewell,—yours,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 15.)

"Norwich, February 7th, 1800.

"In the eclogue you may thus correct the vicious lines:

'Surely the Invalides, an asylum for soldiers disabled.'

'Proud-born men who against kings wrote, fought, conquer'd and kill'd kings.'

The final alteration of the former line will be an advantage, as it rids me of a paltry preposition which looks like a peg, and of a spondee employed afterwards in the very same situation. With respect to the general question, what hexameters are fittest for, I think it unanswerable as yet. The adaptedness of one rhythm or form of stanza for one purpose, and of another

for a different purpose, is wholly, or nearly so, the result of association. Because we are accustomed to read elegies in the heroic quatrain, we have gradually learned to associate melancholy mood with that arrangement of line; because we are accustomed to employ double rimes in ludicrous composition, we have learned to associate ridiculous ideas with their frequent recurrence. Alexandrines appear to a Frenchman the natural dress of lofty declamation,—we employ them in a 'Bath Guide' or an 'Election Ball.' Boileau's

'Est-ce donc pour veiller qu'on se couche à Paris?'

and Anstie's

'That he clapt on a caustic instead of a poultice,'

scan alike, for the *ad libitum* of masculine and feminine rimes runs through both poems. The French know nothing of rhythm, only of *number* in their verses, and make no difference between an anapæstic quadruped and a six-foot iambic; and is not Pegasus in a canter, or Pegasus in full trot, still Pegasus, who always moves in the opinion of his rider with the grace of an antelope, and in that of the spectator like a hunted ostrich? To return: if, therefore, the Iliad and the Messiah were to introduce hexameters to the English public,—if the first popular works of consequence in this metre were of the grave

and loftier kind, an association would be formed in the public mind of solemnity with hexameters; but if an Odyssey lowered in tone, or the Bucolics of Voss, or the 'Batrachomyomachia,' were first to make their appearance, I think it probable that an association of rusticity with hexameters might be produced; so that it depends upon the first work of leade to give a character to hexameter verse. The fortunes of a poem depend on beauties of a far other order than the length of a line or the cadence of its termination. Thus much may however be pleaded in behalf of hexameters in England now. As most things have been said, and well said in our language, it is often necessary to plagiarize; Potter could not translate Æschylus without stealing from Milton and Gray. But the stolen is less apt to excite the idea of its origin, and consequently to interfere with the pleasure of the reader and his admiration for the author, if it be thrown into new metre and unfamiliarized by strange combination. This end hexameter facilitates. Old English answered this purpose to Chatterton, who is the most incessant plagiary, except Gray, of all the modern poets. Wieland is altogether a plagiary: he has hardly an incident or a thought unborrowed, and reads for no other purpose than to make foreign beauties his own; yet how well he amalgamates and

besilvers all! Indeed, writers who are too proud to steal, seldom equal their predecessors; it being far easier to improve upon what has been said before in a parallel case, than to say all anew as well as he who first used the situation. Tasso, who next to Homer seems to me the best epic, is, like Wieland, a borrower. Had he written in hexameter he would have reminded us too often of Virgil, &c., whom he was gutting.

"You ask me more about Henry than I can answer. What I have seen of his writing in prose or verse gives a less high idea of his talent than I formed from his conversation. But this ought to be; writing is an art, and time is ill employed at fifteen in learning it: knowledge, or rather the means of coming at any specific knowledge,—languages, are the proper study of that time. Inapplication, versatility, are, I suppose, the dangers of a mind like Henry's, which tends more to spirit, ambition, impatience, distinction, than to tenderness, contentment, perseverance, posthumous praise. He will be the architect of his fortune.

"The journey you talk of through Vienna to Trieste will surely be unpleasant during the continuance of hostilities, very likely, if Prussia stirs, to involve the centre of Germany; but of this a few months hence you will be a better

judge. The young king is said to be after bestowing a constitution, and a free one, on the north of Germany. This is courage after the example of Louis; but it will have an opposite result, because the people are now warned against their own insanities.

"Sir Robert Barclay has been here, after confinement in the Temple at Paris as a spy. When Bonaparte got the sway, he was released with a thousand apologies, and invited to visit the ministers and everything else at Paris. He spent about a fortnight in amusive gaiety. His account is very flattering: the lower orders are all thriving; the generals are beginning to build new palaces; the circles of the ministers' wives are the pleasantest blue-stocking clubs imaginable. Bonaparte is a small, grey-haired, war-worn man, very grave, very puritanical, and about to be religious. All the French now affect gravity, and will become grave if Bonaparte lives to reign. He has quarrelled with his old friend Berthier, for taking his mistress publicly to the theatre. This, however, is probably a pretext, of which some jealousy of ambition is the cause. Everything is cheap in France but the wages of labour.

"I hope to see the day when I shall fall in with your friend Davy. The paper in the 'Contributions' has made his reputation; he will, I

am persuaded, more than preserve it. Such talent, to whatever else applied, would no doubt excel at length; but he has not breathed the air of Helicon so familiarly as the light of nature, or not so inspiringly. May he restore you, my dear friend, to health, to immortality!

"*Leben Sie wohl!* (live well), as the Germans say.

"WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 16.)

"Norwich, February 16th, 1800.

"I have lately spent a morning or two, my dear friend, in making an index to the first 'Anthology' in rime. You can better estimate than myself the irritability of the irritable race. I do not see that I have treated myself more sparingly than my neighbours, and I can bear to hear it read aloud. You come off worst, because you have contributed most profusely, yet I am sure you will not heed such nettle-stings. The 'Song of Pleasure' of Davy's (I read it anew in order to find something to abuse) is certainly one of the finest poems in our language, and worthy of Sir William Jones; it is only too full of rose-leaves. I do not oppose, although I do not wish you to eke out the new 'Anthology' with this advertisement of the

last; but if there is yet time, I will transcribe and address to you two acts of 'Wortigerne,' after the manner of Chatterton; which, however, must be ushered into the world with some equivocal words of advertisement, as if it were a real Rowley or more Chattertoniana.

"WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

The index to which this letter relates is a string of satirical abstracts or epitomes of all the poems contained in the first volume of the 'Anthology.' These effusions of sportive criticism and "good-humoured banter" were scarcely adapted for publication, much less when they would have the effect of making the second part of a work place the preceding volume in a somewhat ridiculous light. The following are specimens of the playfulness of the writer's wit, expended equally on his own compositions as on those of his fellow-contributors to that miscellaneous collection:—

"Page 60.—On the Ode to the Burnie-Bee.

Some itching Muse, unconscious what had stirr'd,
Scratch'd her sleek locks, and caught—a lady-bird."

"Page 172.—On the Ode to St. Michael's Mount.

Of Helicon's harmonious streams,
One perforates Saint Michael's Mount, I think;
For all West-countrymen, it seems,
When they would rhyme, must there dilute their ink."

"Page 218.—On Abel Shufflebottom's Love Elegies.

Muse, by thy whispers aid me to compose!
He pray'd: Erato only blew her nose."

"Page 220.—On the same.

She sings—a most unlucky thing,
Because it makes her lover sing."

"Page 249.—On Major Cartwright's Appeal. By George Dyer.

When cartwrights to state-coachwrights rise,
Let dyers mix the panels' dyes."

"Page 255.—On Lines to a Spider.

Lines that only catch a fly
Spiders make—and so do I."

The editor wisely made no use of these epigrams, although in his next letter he bestowed upon them high commendation.

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 16.)

"Kingsdown, Bristol, Feb. 20th, 1800.

"Your epigrammatic index I should much like to insert: for the most part it is very good; but some of the epigrams are obtuse, or else my comprehension is. I wonder at your praise of the 'Song of Pleasure'; the latter stanzas of the 'Sons of Genius,' from 'Thus the pale moon,' to 'scorn the lunar sway,' appear to me worth a myriad of such poems. It has luxury of language, but nought else; I have burnt piles of such poetry.—To sit down resolutely to write epigrams upon given subjects is no easy task,

and you have well accomplished it. Send me the 'Wortigerne': eighty pages are yet to be printed, and I shall be glad of the matter. Preface it with what ambiguity you will; and if I can throw in, as editor, any antiquarian notes as corroborations, I will do it.

"Davy is proceeding in his chemical career with the same giant strides as at his outset. His book upon the nitrous oxyd will form an epoch in the science. I never witnessed such indefatigable activity in any other man, nor ardour so regulated by cool judgement. But chemistry, I clearly see, will possess him wholly and too exclusively: he allows himself no time for acquiring other knowledge. In poetry he will do nothing more: he talks of it, and that is all; nor can I in conscience urge him to perform promises which are perhaps better broken than kept. In his own science he will be the first, and the high places in poetry have long been occupied.

"Your praise of Tasso gratified me. I deem him hitherto the best of epic poets after the unequalable Homer. Of Virgil I cannot think highly except as a versifier; but in Tasso, except as to the defect in his prominent character, there is everything to commend. If you should visit me at Hampshire in the summer, as I hope, you shall see the first outline of 'Madoc,'

which, if I live some half dozen years, shall be my monument; all else are the mere efforts of apprenticeship.

"My departure will probably be delayed till the autumn, and Lisbon the place of retreat. Go I must, or the worst consequences may result. Still I am ailing about the heart, and, in spite of reasoning and probabilities, cannot but suspect, whenever its irregularities call my attention, that something is out of order about the mainspring. Connected with this at times, and at times recurring without it, are seizures in the head, like the terror that induces fainting,—a rush through all my limbs as if the stroke of annihilation were passing through. I never feel this when I am interested in employment; but the mere recollection and fear will bring it on. This then seems decidedly nervous; but it must not be trifled with, for it threatens worse than the heart-pain. Should I go to Lisbon, my intention is to write the history of Portugal. Without some employment of this kind I cannot live, and this would fill my wishes and thoughts and time; and this I could and would well execute with all ardour and with all industry of research. If I go elsewhere it must be to Italy, and Trieste the road there; for a sea-voyage is to me a tremendous thing, and my intestines will all rise up in mutiny against it.

Trieste is not a place to fix at. I am recommended by Duppa to Vicenza or Padua, if that part of Italy be safe; to Vicenza for its exquisite beauties of situation, to Padua for its society. Tuscany is perhaps safer. Somewhere I must go, for removal from this climate is inevitable; and unless I go to the south of Europe, I may amuse myself with the idea of setting out on the tour of the universe—a journey which I should rather delay.

"When I send you the 'Anthology,' I will send with it some of the proposal papers for the Chatterton subscription, the which if you can promote you will be doing an act of charity.

"Your hexameters have a quaint appearance; for as the longitude of the line did not suit the latitude of the page, they are printed sideways. Is the 'Death of Abel' written in hexameters? Macpherson seems to have practised at them, for his Ossian is full of fragments of them, with the frequent recurrence of whole lines and pentameters. The applicability of this metre to our language is, I think, sufficiently proved: the practice of two days would enable me to wield them as easily as blank verse. Wordsworth made the best objection to them—the beginning of the line has not enough cadence to be like poetry, the end has too much. Mine is an easy, good-natured ear, tickled at

sounds which would jar that of any other person; but I do not depend upon my own ear alone in approving English hexameters. God bless you!

"Yours affectionately,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 17.)

"Norwich, March 1st, 1800.

"On the whole it may be as well to suppress the epigrams altogether. It was but an impertinent experiment on your good-humour to send them; but I did not like to have amused myself at your expense, without making to you the confession of all my profaneness.

"Mr. F. of Ormesby writes me that the Rev. Sir Herbert Croft, Bart., is now at Yarmouth, where he has been above six months at lodgings at Mr. Brown's, hairdresser, on the quay; and that he is printing there a letter to you, containing bitter remarks on what you published in the Monthly Magazine relative to his conduct towards Chatterton's family. Sir Herbert is certainly poor, and perhaps wishes his creditors still to suppose him in Denmark; Mr. F. thinks the publication is to be dated from Copenhagen.

"This serves to accompany two acts of 'Wortigerne.' You will be able to judge if they are

best produced in the 'Anthology,' or in some other form and time. They might be announced as manuscripts transmitted to the editor of Chatterton's works, which, however, the public will hardly consider as real reliques of Rowley; but which contain passages of sufficient poetical merit to justify the publication, even before the exact history of the manuscript is ascertained.

"The hexameters had better have been printed in small types, than across the length of the page; they are best adapted for a work in quarto. The proposal papers for the Chatterton subscription which Burnett gave me have produced five subscribers.

"I am chewing the cud of pain, having a swelled face. Do you know it is precisely in a torment of this kind that I like to sit down to make task-verses?"

[This letter here breaks off abruptly, the cause of which is explained in No. 18.]

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 17.)

"My dear Friend, "10 Stoke Croft, Bristol.

"Your 'Wortigerne' reached me, and it has given me much pleasure. The 'Anthology' I find has not room for it; are you willing to annex it, with all due doubtfulness of prefatory scepticism, to the Rowley of Chatterton in the new edition?

I should think nothing misplaced that gave additional value to the volumes, and this your fragment assuredly would do. As for the proof it contains of the possibility of writing such poems now, there needs no new evidence. But the poetry is very, very fine, and its masquerade spelling will become familiar to the reader who has previously deciphered Chatterton's. If you think this a fit mode of publication, I will save you the trouble of making a glossary. A few evenings since, my friend Rickman amused himself in examining the fac-simile in Rowley, and copying out all the *e*s in the twelve lines: he found no less than twenty-seven *genera*, each totally different from the other, and many of them impossible to have been used in writing (except with the design of producing a strange unsightliness), from the various manners in which it was necessary to hold the pen in tracing them. These *e*s I shall place at the bottom of the fac-simile.

"Sir Herbert's letter I saw in the Gentleman's Magazine, just before your information respecting him arrived. In my reply I have admitted no personality: his own letter sufficiently proves the truth of my statement. Do you know that he is distantly related to me? Harry bears also the name Herbert from the same origin, a name which has continued in my

mother's family since they branched from the Croft stock.

"Your epigrams frightened Cottle; he deprecated the insertion lest they should intimidate all correspondents. I laughed and argued, but not effectually; and as the risque of the 'Anthology' is Cottle's, I did not feel justified in using my voice potential. Wherever you print them, do not suppress the 'chilly river.' The 'Inscription' is a bad one and deserves no mercy; and were it better, you know not the little value I set on these trifles. I expect soon to send you the 'Anthology,' and with it the 'Noah,' which has been detained too long and used too little.

"I wait with unpleasant anxiety the letter from Lisbon which will decide my destination. Lisbon I hope will be the place: old recollections attract me there, and the prospect of employment in the history of the kingdom important enough to excite ardour, and sufficiently interesting to prevent lassitude.

"*March* 26.—This unfinished sheet has remained, like an evil conscience, for some weeks in my desk. My destination is now settled; we are in all the bustle of preparing for a twelvemonth's absence from England, and purpose leaving this place in a fortnight on our way to Falmouth and Lisbon. If I were not villainously sick at sea, the whole anticipation would be

pleasant; but the certainty of intestine commotions excites qualms already: between setting foot on board ship and leaving it in port, the interim is like a phantasma or hideous dream. My intention is seriously to undertake the History of Portugal, and to qualify myself for the task by travelling over the whole of the little kingdom, and well understanding the site of every place whereof it may be my office to write. No country possesses a better series of chronicles. I shall visit the various convent-libraries, and hunt out all scarce documents. Twelve months well employed will suffice for the collection of materials; and if otherwise, I am not limited to time. One thing I shall especially attempt in writing history,—to weave the manners of the times, as far as possibly can be done, into the narrative, instead of crowding the volume with appendix chapters; rather, in this point, to resemble the old chroniclers than the modern historians.

"You will direct to me with the Rev. Herbert Hill, Lisbon. Your gossamery paper, which I have sometimes growled at for letting the ink through, will suit well the post-office of a country where an extravagant price is charged by weight. Remember that as for society,—such as suits my habits,—Lisbon is always in a state of famine; and that the receipt of a letter in a

foreign country is a joy that lasts for a week. My intention is, if peace permits, to return through the south of Spain and over the Pyrenees to Calais. Surely there will not be another year's war; and I would wait some months for peace beyond the proposed limits of my stay. Much, however, depends upon the effect which the climate may produce upon me; experiments upon health are too important in their result not to excite some anxiety. My complaint is probably not organic, but it remains to be proved removable; and only from climate can I expect this.

"In the course of ten days you will receive the 'Anthology.' For the third volume I shall delegate my authority. I am sorry my name was given in the Reviews and Monthly Magazine. In reviewing anonymous works myself, when I have known the authors, I have never mentioned them, taking it for granted they had sufficient motives for avoiding this publicity.

"Let me hear from you before my departure. God bless you!

"Yours affectionately,

"Robert Southey."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 18.)

" Norwich, April 1st, 1800.

" You must have been cut off, my dear friend, with two-thirds of my last letter, for I found the remaining third afterwards begun upon a distinct sheet of paper. It related chiefly to your health—is full of condolence and of prescription,—a very nurse's peroration. It tells you that I too once fancied myself in a pulmonary consumption, that I spat the blood-sprent suspended mucus, and that I have always willingly ascribed my recovery to the practice of smoking tobacco—which may act, 1. by callosifying lungs too sieve-like; 2. by phlogisticating a too pure atmosphere of respiration; 3. by alkalinizing a hyperoxygenated mass of blood; 4. by permanently stimulating a too irritable system. Dr. Beddoes himself must allow that some one of the theories will do, and might, I think, advise you to take a cigar in Portugal,—a cigar, the friend of silent reminiscence, the peculiar incense for the shrines of Harpocrates and Mnemosyne. Why do you go before the autumn?

" I steadily disadvise spoiling your new edition of Chatterton by tacking to it any unappertaining stuff of mine. A classical edition of an unperishable poet is always a respectable toil; but it would be editing too much in character to

make the edition a vehicle for more reliques of Rowley. If, however, you very much wish to use them, I shall consent; but if not,—as on reflection will be your case,—I shall send them one day to the Monthly Magazine, with some equivocal introduction, and a glossary of the few words not in Chatterton or Tyrwhitt's Chaucer, all which are interpretable through the medium of the German, except perhaps *lentil-dew*, a name given to the duckweed, a green mantle of the standing pool, in old herbals. All the antiquarian parts, the pictures of manners and the mythological allusions, are written with knowledge of the subject; the poetry, like all other poetry, is only here and there good. The worst piece of trash is the ballad in the first act. It is very easy to write verses with a deal of *ees*, because we may mis-spell into rime what tongue or ear never mistook for jingle before. There is merit of the pathetic sort in the scene between Rowene and Hengist, and of the epic sort in the scene of Rowene and the Skalds, describing the battle. That is a good moment when Hengist, on discovering his guest, is 'content his labouring breast unswoll.' The warre-songs approach several times to fine poetry; but there still remains too much of them, although I omitted to write out fair a full third of what lies by me yrimedde carefullie. My grand recipe for composition, as you well

know, is to put down at first all one thinks of (this I call brewing), and then to abridge and abridge and abridge (this I call distilling) until only the essential oil is left of the original vegetation,—the otr, instead of the rose-garden.

"The epigrams I should not think of printing anywhere but in the 'Anthology,' where they would be read for good-humoured banter of what often requires it,—the frolic of an afternoon; elsewhere they would seem to have been meant for satire and to want bitingness,—to have neither the courage to thrust nor the skill to wound. The 'Anthology' is not surely select enough to maintain its ground even now; with an editor still more complaisant, it will contain mere weeds of Parnassus. I recommend rather a total stop of labour than the compilement of a muck-heap. Your just observation about the impropriety of using authors' names in public journals, when speaking of writings not onomously claimed, ought to have been present to the writer of your life in the 'Public Characters.'

"The History of Portugal is a neat subject; it involves the commercial education of modern nations, as that of the Medicean dynasty does their literary education. The colonial system, and all that constitutes the exterior policy of Great Britain, is but a refinement of Portuguese undertaking, just as all the modern schools of

poetry and art have run for models to Florence and to Rome. The relation which each country bears to the progress of universal civilization, constitutes the cause and measure of its interestingness in universal history. To bring out in local history the facts and men and sweeps of event and general tendencies which influence *the whole*, constitutes the grand art of the historian. Individuals are not estimated by their positive but by their relative value; and we inquire much and long only about those who, like the æons in the pleroma, not only once partook but still influence the condition of humanity.

"If you like to write a short, undated, but signed introductory letter to 'Wortigerne,' which I might at pleasure transmit to the Monthly Magazine along with the poem—throwing out a suspicion of their being Rowleyana or Chattertoniana, but disclaiming your personal persuasion to that effect—you will send it me in the same packet with the poem; any anonymous note dated Bristol will answer the purpose.

"Heartily wishing you every increase of health and strength which you hope from your journey, I shake you pressingly by the hand and bid you farewell. If during your tour I can in any way be useful to you or yours, command me with the freedom of a friend.

"Yours affectionately,

"William Taylor, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 18.)

"My dear Friend, "Cintra, July 5th, 1800.

"I know not why distance by water should occasion neglect of letter-writing more than distance by land; but my English correspondents have proved the fact to me, and I in my turn have given you sufficient reason to believe it. We were in Lisbon on May-day: look at the date above, and pardon and absolve him that doth truly repent.

"First of my health, the immediate object of this emigration. The effect of climate has been what I expected and wished: night-seizures I have none; the irregularity of my heart is lessened, not removed; I eat voraciously; and, above all, enjoy an everlasting sunshine of spirits. Something of this is assuredly owing to the total change of scenery and society, but the climate has been the great cause. In England, summer and winter, I sit by the fire—I have never seen a fire since my departure from Falmouth. The society here is rather such as would depress the spirits of a man accustomed to freedom of speech and intellectual intercourse. Literature here is none; and I am too fond of tranquillity ever to utter a political opinion where a true Catholic uniformity of sentiment prevails. I hunger and thirst for the intercourse of my friends, and yet feel the climate so sensibly, that

if only inclination were to be consulted, I should perhaps pitch my tent here, and settle in a country where the will of the sovereign is paramount and the Inquisition consummates the church establishment.

"The political situation of Portugal is far more critical than when I last visited it. A foolish treaty with Russia has offended Spain, the only probable consequence of such a treaty. If it be the intention of Bonaparte to shut us out from the Mediterranean, this port will not again be left for the English fleet. We are inclined here to believe Lisbon will be the point aimed at by the Brest fleet: it can make no resistance; the forts are weak, soon silenced or soon passed; the English force very trifling; the city without fortifications; the Spanish forces alone, should the attack be made by land, are equal to the conquest of the country. 'They are only Spaniards,' you will say; but they would have only Portuguese for their enemies, and numbers would decide the contest. But it is the fear of Spain for her own tottering government that has preserved this; the revolutionary torrent, when let loose, will not follow the line of demarcation; the Spaniard is therefore careful how he sets fire to his next-door neighbour's house. The folly of irritating Spain by a treaty with Russia, after that barbarian Paul had so absurdly declared war

against Spain, was a fine specimen of Portuguese policy, more especially as the Spanish minister, who now directs everything, is a violent Jacobin, of more zeal than prudence. The solitary merchantman at sea wishes for the wind that suits his course, whether or no it thwart fleets and expeditions: I confess that it would please me a great deal better to read the capture of Lisbon in England than to witness it; and I should carry home the news with very different feelings from those which would be excited by an order commanding all English subjects to evacuate Portugal. A long passage in a crowded transport would be a sad way of returning, after I have planned a journey over the Pyrenees and a visit to Paris.

"Time will decide all these chances. Perhaps the income-tax and the campaign in Italy may plead for peace in England. Meantime I live as comfortably as if no earthquake were brooding under my feet, literally and metaphorically. It is just a week since we removed here for the summer, to a spot the most delightful I have ever known. I am daily acquiring knowledge for the history of the kingdom. My materials for the literary history of both countries will, except the translations, be complete when I return; and the miscellaneous information, which my eyes and ears pick up, will swell into

a volume. In autumn, when the weather will permit, I shall begin my travels and visit the whole of the country: literary habits and employments make some amends for the want of society. I go among the English no more than civility demands, and always return to my books with a better appetite.

"The strangest novelties here are a mail-coach and paper-money—the history of both characteristic of the statesmen. The mail-coach is priced so highly, that a single person may go to Porto (the road it runs) in a chaise somewhat cheaper; time only therefore is saved, for it actually travels an English mail pace, eight miles an hour: but this high price excludes the main body of travellers from profiting by the speed, and the little dealers must still jog backward and forward on their mules. This therefore will not last long; no vehicle can run *profitably* faster than the usual posting-pace of the country: this is a royal undertaking. Immediately upon issuing the paper-money, they set the example of discounting it. Only half the sum you pay is a legal tender; the consequences are a progressive depreciation and an advance in price upon every article. They chose to pay the sailors in paper, and when these fellows found out what they lost by it, they rioted and shouted 'Bonaparte for ever!'—a name now growing more bugbearish

than ever. Pasquinades are common here: the 'order, counter-order and disorder' caricature of Paul was applied to the prince; and I saw the other day a sonnet which was affixed to the opera-house door, recommending transportation for some of the ministry and a madhouse for others. A friar who preached some months ago before the prince chose to give him a political sermon, but not in the English fashion,—it was a lecture upon the wrong measures he was pursuing. When it was over, the princess waked her husband and asked him if he had heard what that fellow had been saying: the consequence was an order to confine the priest to his convent. These are merely bubbles that rise to the stagnant surface.

"I am preparing 'Thalaba' for the press, designing to send it over for publication, and travel home upon its profits in the spring. You never gave me your judgement of 'Gebir:' I have it with me and read it daily. I have been much amused with a metrical life of Vieyra, the Portuguese painter, written by himself, the most original mixture of devotion, enthusiasm and vanity I ever met with. A quarto volume, published by the Academy here in compliment to the victories of Maria Theresa, furnishes me some incomparable specimens for a chapter upon the absurdities of literature, which make no inconsi-

derable part in an historical account of Portuguese letters. It abounds with crosses and wheels and anonymous follies, that are to be read across and athwart and all ways from the middle.

" We have French and Italian news rather earlier than it reaches England, by way of Madrid. Berthier's victory is felt very heavily here; so much hope and expectation was excited, that I hear everybody complaining.

" I must have some poem in hand when 'Thalaba' is gone, and it will be probably my hexameter 'Mohammed.' The necessity of beginning the line with a long syllable seems more hostile to our language than anything else in the metre: an iambic must be used there occasionally, or a redundant syllable. I am afraid your eclogue will be abused for my sake: a hostile hand is at work in the Monthly Review against me, or the 'Old Woman of Berkeley' must have been more civilly treated. With 'Thalaba' I trust you will be satisfied; it satisfies myself. Let me hear from you soon: the arrival of a packet excites fifty-fold more hope and fear than the daily posts of England. God bless you!

" Yours affectionately,

" Robert Southey."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 19.)

"Dear Friend, "Norwich, October 5th, 1800.

"I am ashamed to look at the date of the letter I have to answer. July—October, what a gap! Procrastination is the thief of time, and three whole months have elapsed over the *shill I, shall I* (as we say in Norfolk) sit down in earnest to write to Cintra. Observe, however, that I sent Burnett your address in good time, and have only my own sins to answer for. Henry wrote to me the other day; his hint accelerates my trip of the pen. He seems aware that he is no longer among boys of his own age and forwardness, that his emulation is not stimulated, and that his time of life, and turn of life, and views of life, and projects in life, all indicate the expediency of as early a promotion as possible from puerile to juvenile station. You talk of residing near London, and sending him to daily attendance at the lecture-rooms: this seems to me the business of a finishing season and one year's occupation, not the regular apprenticeship. Surely you would find it more economical to place him for four or five years with some provincial surgeon of eminence, who would instruct him until he is ripe for settling. I have every veneration for the genius of Car-

lyle, and every confidence in his friendship for you; but genius never was remarkable for teaching the practical utilities, and friendship never so prone to persevering as to profuse services. The passion for glory would be learnt under Carlyle,—perhaps the eccentricities also which usually disappoint fame-hunters of advancement in life. The fine enthusiasms, because they do not lead to prosperity, are apt to terminate in misanthropy: they are a dower which I would choose myself, but not which I would confer on my sons—or at least not on any but my favourite son; they are a misfortune to the many. The metropolis is however, on the whole, the place to form the great surgeon; contented mediocrity is always the ultimate destiny of us provincials. Gamble in life is the motto for a man of spirit—but to what purpose am I prating? Until your return, nothing can be done; and when you return, new circumstances may of themselves decide the fate of a plan, against which I ought not to prejudice you in the least; it is knotting a difficulty which I am not able to untie.

"I was much interested in your information about Portugal; your mail-coaches, paper-money and pasquinades are features wholly new to repute. The French are more likely to threaten than to execute an invasion, if, as is supposed, they obtain subsidies of forbearance, a secret

tribute: they will not hastily kill a goose that lays golden eggs. Besides, the Brazils would become English empire, if the French were to conquer your country and exchange it with Spain for the lands north of the Ebro, in order to begin a series of trans-pyrenean departments. We are hoping here for peace, and trusting with the old confidence in Mr. Pitt's pacificity. Mr. Fox has announced his determination to stand no more for Westminster. The mob have risen, and the livery have petitioned about the price of bread; but corn and petitioning will probably drop together; and the new ministerial Lord Mayor, Sir William Staines, will have the pleasure of appearing to restore the loyalty or royalism of London. The stocks are not sensibly depressed, even with the prospect of a new loan of fifteen millions; and the high price of food, if it displeases the poor, pleases the country-gentlemen, so that ministers would be more endangered perhaps by the surcease than by the success of monopoly and regrating. Literature with liberty languishes. Embassies to Thibet, to Ava —accounts of the war with Tippoo Sultaun; Asiatic Researches, with the other branches of oriental information, form the most interesting side of present publication. What a shame to your Portuguese that they should so long have held possession on the coast of India, and have told

us so little of Sanscrit literature! The inscribed stone they brought to Europe our Murphy had to copy and our Wilkins to read. Had Camoens known their mythology, how much more appropriate might his machinery have been made! The taking of Seringapatam is a good subject for you epo-poets: I see Mahomet and all the monsters of the Koran confederated in its defence, and the ancient divinities of Hindostan, in alliance with the Christian sainthood, assisting the English army to conquer for the Tremourtee or Trinity new sanctuaries, and plant its tricoloured union flag on the shattered battlements of the unitarian metropolis. David and Krishen compose in concert the hymns of triumph; St. Cecilia and the Gopia in sweeter concert execute the aërial harmonies; Vishnu undertakes another incarnation to fight beside Captain Campbell; and the two St. James's once more mount their coursers to announce a victory to Sir John Shore: to the emperor of the British isles St. Paul himself will have presented Brama and Sheva and Nayarena and Rama, and all his own protectors and protectresses, especially Cuvera, the Plutus of the land; Cama will promise husbands to his daughters; Ganga will offer his waters for a new and holier baptism.

"'Gebir,' about which you ask me, does not please me; it wants common sense: when you

have read it through, you know nothing of the story or of the locality, or the characters introduced. There are exquisitely fine passages; but they succeed each other by such flea-skips of association, that I am unable to track the path of the author's mind, and verily suspect him of insanity. He makes his appeal to a jury of geniusses: as I am sure of being challenged, my opinion can be of no consequence; it is not the verdict of the pannel. I am told that Whitehouse, the author of the 'Odes,' is coming out with a new volume of poems; I expect them with great eagerness. I cannot in conscience expect, though in inclination I wish much, to hear from you soon.

"Yours,

"WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 19.)

"Lisbon, November 26, 1800.

"Dear William Taylor,

"I am perplexed about Harry. * * * Your plan is better than mine, which was only imagined the most practicable, when formed, not the best. Will you make inquiry in your part of the world if such a situation can be procured for him? Among you I know it must be his wish to settle, nor elsewhere have I any motive

for preference of place. With Bristol my own connection is precarious. Davy will not always remain at the Pneumatic Institution; and the death of a very infirm old lady, which cannot long delay, will perhaps remove from thence my dearest friend and leave me little heart to visit it again. * * * It has been suggested to me to try my fortune at the East Indian bar, where success could not be doubtful. My inclinations are decidedly hostile to the scheme; but I must not lightly and hastily reject it. My constitution unhappily requires a warmer climate than England; of this my health here is a convincing proof. Moreover old Brama would be an interesting acquaintance. The contra arguments weigh heavier, and Camoens warns me from India. But it is time to talk of Portugal. We have as yet escaped the yellow fever, and the yellow fever will effectually guard us against the French and Spaniards, if any danger could be apprehended from invasion. No such danger has ever existed. Before a French army could reach Lisbon, the whole species would be embarked, and here the property is kept in chests ready at a moment's alarm. The multitude of ships always in the Tagus would take off the more valuable merchandize. Plunder therefore cannot allure the French here; the remaining bales of cotton would not pay their soldiers,

nor the sugar-casks sweeten their lemonade. Besides, provisions are scarce both here and in Spain; a hostile army could not subsist six weeks. If, however, the French should choose to take possession of Lisbon in order to distress England, the blow would speedly recoil; a fleet would block up the Tagus, and famine speedily drive them over the Pyrenees. Spain and Portugal must one day blend into one country; the hour is not yet come. One country is not strong enough to conquer—both too unenlightened to unite. You then, as well as we, will wonder at the enormous army quartered here, if you can wonder at any ministerial absurdity. The most probable opinion here is, that it is a collusion between the courts of Madrid and Lisbon, managed by France, to get as many English troops here as possible. In order to keep them quiet, they solicited for Abercrombie's troops also—the whole expedition—to prevent the attack on Egypt. The necessary advance in the price of provisions oppresses the people, who see the cause in the foreign soldiers: they talk very freely. The army and navy lose twenty per cent. by the paper in which they are paid; of course the discount goes to account, and the arrears must be one day paid.

"I am up to the ears in chronicles—a pleasant day's amusement: but battles and folios,

and Moors and monarchs, teaze me terribly in my dreams. I have just obtained access to the public manuscripts, and the records of the Inquisition tempt me—five folios—the whole black catalogue; yet I am somewhat shy of laying heretical hands upon these bloody annals. The Holy Office is not dead, but sleepeth. There, however, it is that I must find materials for the history of Reformation here and its ineffectual efforts. I obtain access through one of the censors of books here, an ex-German divine, who enlisted in the Catholic service, professing the one faith with the same sincerity that he preached the other,—a strong-headed, learned and laborious man, curious enough to preserve his authoritative reviews of all that is permitted to be printed or sold in Portugal. These reviews I have seen, and by this means become acquainted with what is not brought to light. The Public Library here is magnificently established—the books well arranged, with ample catalogues, a librarian to every department and free access to all—without a cloak. The Museum is also shut to all in this the common dress—a good trait of national honesty. The ruin of the Jesuits gave rise to this foundation. Their libraries were all brought to Lisbon, and the books remained as shovelled out of the carts for many years. They are not yet wholly ar-

ranged. English writers are very few—scarcely any. But for what regards the peninsula, for church and monastic history, and the laborious and valuable compilations of the two last centuries, a more complete collection does not probably exist.

"I regret my approaching return to England, and earnestly wish I could remain six or seven years in a country whose climate so well suits me, and where I could find ample and important occupation. Once more I must return, when my history shall be as far completed as is possible at home, to give it its last corrections here.

"The fits of alarm respecting the yellow fever are periodical. About once a week we have a day's panic—not causelessly. Look at Beja in the map; it has been there, but the bishop burnt down the house in which the sick had died. Three days last week the public amusements were suspended, and the efficacy of prayer tried. The more respectable congregations that attended evinced a general fear. St. Roque's life is advertised in the Madrid Gazette, as the saint to be called in in pestilence. St. Sebastian is famous in these cases. Earthly remedies, none have been found, or none in Lisbon. Even now the nature of the disease is differently reported, and the method of treatment not known: we trust to cold weather and

the rains; should these only suspend the contagion, if it breaks out again in the spring, it must inevitably reach Lisbon, and I shall then think of my own safety.

"From England nothing has reached me but the unhappy 'Alfred' of poor Cottle. I laboured hard and honestly to suppress its birth, and am thrown into a cold sweat by recollecting it. Coleridge ought to be upon the Life of Lessing; he ought also to write to me, and I have my fears lest the more important business should be neglected like the other. George Burnett has not written to me, nor have I done my duty towards him. My Bristol accounts of his going on are such as have pained me. The Anti-Jacobin is, as you know, appointed our envoy; and, like everybody else, I must make my formal visit. I hear he has all the coxcombry of an Etonian, and the most I retain of Westminster is an Etonophobia, confirmed by seeing them at Oxford. Frere, however, is undoubtedly a man of genius. Pray write to me: I am in an illiterate land, only among acquaintance. Your letters will be weighed among your good works. God bless you!

"Yours,

"Robert Southey."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 20.)

" Norwich, February 1st, 1801.

" Your letter of the 26th November has been long unanswered; but it was useless to trouble you with statements of perplexities, when it was impossible to wait for the aid of your opinion. Some chronicle of what has passed is due to you.

" About the time you wrote, Henry was receiving a proposal from his uncle, Mr. Hill, to emigrate from Normanston to Oxford and devote himself to the church of England. The educational prejudices of Maurice's pupil bristled of course at so shocking a proposal. Henry a priest—O sacrilege! He wrote however to consult me. I advised him in a very eloquent epistle to go into the church. If he has kept the letter and shows it you some day, you will perceive I missed my aim, from ignorance of his having a younger brother. Indeed no other respectable reason can be given for Henry's refusing this splendid offer, than his unwillingness to intercept the portion of Edmund, and I firmly believe it was the most operative one. If the interests of the family imperiously require that he should accept his uncle's proffered preferment, I am convinced he is not inexorable; he

can be brought to condescend to wear the sacerdotal robe.

" Henry has chosen to tell his uncle that he prefers, or expects to prefer, a medical to a clerical life; and in the most handsome manner Mr. Hill has enabled me to place him with Mr. Philip Martineau (to whose pleasant villa you will recollect our walking during Burnett's lameness), who has the most profitable practice of any surgeon in Norwich—whose weight of character, moral and professional, is found to preserve the esteem, and whose urbanity must conciliate the love, of his apprentices. I am so entirely convinced that if Henry is to pursue medicine, he cannot be more eligibly placed than with Mr. Martineau, that I have no anxiety about this arrangement obtaining your eventual approbation. Mr. M. is cousin to Mr. and Mrs. John Taylor, whom you recollect with interest, and with whose son, Edward Taylor, Henry seems to be forming a very intimate friendship. Dr. Smith, the botanist, is attentive to Henry; he will, in point of acquaintance, be comfortable here.

" Sir James Bland Burgess has just been proving, that very smoothly polished and laboriously wrought antijacobin poetry may be imperusably dull. I have read one whole canto and half several cantoes of his ' Richard the First,' and the arguments of all the eighteen cantoes,

in the hope of being directed by them to some bearable episode ; but, alas ! it is all duller still than the Berlin 'Richard Löwenherz' printed in 1796. His mythology is the Miltonic, and diabolically hacknied it appears ; the speeches of his devils are rimed paraphrases of the insipidest passages in Cumberland's 'Calvary.' Mr. Sotheby is said to like the poem ; he is very polite or very partial. 'Alfred,' which you mention, I have not seen ; by what I hear, it must have been published to keep Sir James Bland Burgess in countenance. When shall we have 'Thalaba'? I want something to abuse, which I shall read through.

"The king's speech on Tuesday is to announce the abolition of the test and corporation acts, and popish penal laws. I grudge to Pitt the honour and popularity of so wise an innovation. By not acceding earlier to the repeal, he has needlessly occasioned a rebellion in Ireland, and murdered in civil war half a million of the people. It is comforting to find that at length philosophy subdues folly, and that, after kicking against her arguments eight or ten years, and sacrificing, to resist her, the lives and fortunes of millions, the doughtiest champions of superstition and slavery, the loudest clamourers for antijacobin toryism, truckle to her will and execute her decrees.

"We have long had nothing to read. I am becoming theology-mad, and have found out that the apocryphal book, commonly called the Wisdom of Solomon, was written by Jesus Christ himself after the crucifixion. I am composing a dissertation to prove it. Stare, and rank me with the Pauls and Georges.

"Yours,

"WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 21.)

"My dear Friend, "Norwich, July 24th, 1801.

"I am very glad to hear you are once more arrived safe and well in England. Before you settle, do find leisure to come and visit us here. I wish you to see Henry ere the latter days of possible mutability are elapsed, that he may perfectly understand in what degree your will and his uncle's acquiesce in his wish, and that you may understand in what degree his wish is of a kind to bear him through his hazardous election. On the supposition that he is to go on with medicine, I believe him well placed; but it would be no small satisfaction to me that you should look at all this with your own eyes, and hear it with your own ears, instead of sanctioning on trust. Your old apartment in Surry Street is unoccupied; I need not add it is at your service

for a week, a fortnight, a month,—but to you married men one may not talk of a longer absence.

"It is impossible for me to estimate your ties at Bristol; yet it seems not unlikely that after coming hither, and observing narrowly how we are all circumstanced, you would determine rather to take a house in Norwich than elsewhere. Henry (you have no other brother so likely to be soon and leadingly settled) is probably here not for now only, but for life. The opening for a physician in this town is singularly promising. Mr. Martineau's attachment, which is become very strong towards Henry, would secure to him a splendid practice. The place will not be filled up while he is in preparation, because it has the reputation of being already occupied by Dr. Wright. House-rent is very cheap here; you would in that article economize the extra postage of proof-sheets. Henry will be much the better for an elbow-friend, who does not merely preach but practise application and perseverance in every branch of study once undertaken. Society is as come-at-able and as agreeable as in most places:—determine but to live where you are most valued, and Norwich shall not despair.

"I have read the first volume of 'Thalaba,' and begin the next tomorrow. It contains a novel multitude of first-rate descriptive passages;

it rivals in this respect Dryden's 'Alexander's Feast.' There is, I think, a want of obvious human motive in the conduct of the human agents, which diminishes sympathy, which intercepts in part that interest which one feels in 'Joan of Arc' and in 'Oberon' for the heroes and their business. It wins the palm of fancy from all our epo-poets, and equals for erudition of costume the antiquarian accuracy of Klopstock and Wieland: in energy and sublimity, in omission of the weak and watery, it excels the preceding productions of the same hand.—Is that fair? Review my reviewal and tell me.

"Yours attachedly,

"William Taylor, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 20.)

"Bristol, July 27, 1801.

"Dear William Taylor,

"Your letter, in spite of Norfolk frosts and Norfolk flats, would have excited in me some half desire to diet for life upon Norfolk puddings and turnips and turkeys, if destiny did not invite me to a better country. I have the hope and prospect of visiting Italy in a prudent way —as secretary to some legation there—an office of little trouble, with the prospect of advancement. You will not wonder that I look joyfully to a residence in that country. My destination

will probably be Palermo—if peace comes, as likely to any of the other states—and as willingly. Ultimately I look to Lisbon, and certainly to a long absence from England.

"To the other part of your letter—a visit to Norwich would promise much pleasure. But look at the map, and there is a wretched distance between. Besides, my time is otherwise allotted. I am going to Keswick, to pass the autumn with Coleridge—to work like a negro, and to arrange his future plans with my own. He is miserably ill, and must quit England for a warmer climate or perish. I found letters announcing his determination to ship himself and family for the Azores; this I have stopped, and the probability is that he will accompany me abroad.

"There I am to work—but on what, Messrs. Longman and Rees are now deciding. I have proposed to them, either 'Madoc' or a Hindoo romance, to be ready for the press in six months. Of the Hindoo tale, as the plan is complete and the materials ready, I consider the hardest half done. 'Madoc' in its crude state has been sleeping two whole years. I can do either, and am so equally inclined to either, that the power of choice is best in other hands. Of Portugal I could publish much, but dare not shut the door of the archives against my future researches.

I purpose metrical romances upon the basis of Hindoo, Persian and Runic mythology. The Persian seed is sown. Give me four years' life and I will complete all.

"The justice of your praise I of course believe, however ill-qualified to judge. Your censure—there *is* a fault of story—a want of sufficient concatenation of events—perhaps inevitable from the subject. Yet I have found no lack of interest in the readers, who have followed the story breathlessly; nor do I see more motive—human motive—for Huon than Thalaba. The poem compares more fairly with 'Vathek' than with any existing work, and I think may stand by its side for invention. There are parts of the poetry which I cannot hope to surpass. Yet I look with more pride to the truth and the soul that animates 'Joan of Arc.' There is the individual Robert Southey there, and only his imagination in the enchanted fabric. For this also I build the hope, the confidence of my own immortality upon 'Madoc,' because, in a story as diversified as that of 'Thalaba,' human characters are well developed, human incidents well arranged; because it will be as new in the epic as this is in the romance, and assert a bolder claim to originality than has been asserted since the voice of Homer awoke its thousand echoes. I expect with some wishfulness your remarks on

the second volume: I wish your judgement of the metre, for which thank Dr. Sayers in my name: I had a dim boy's perception of it before his book, which rectified some boy's attempts.

"I am so entirely satisfied with Henry's situation, that, were I on the spot, eyes and ears would be useless, and only my tongue wanted to find out phrases of thanks and approbation. Soon he shall hear from me with his 'Thalaba,' which is at the bookbinder's to be drest in my livery. It would be well perhaps if he had my example before him to stimulate an independent frugality,—a difficult virtue, but of all the most necessary, to teach him that the pleasure of forbearance is ever greater than of indulgence. Madame Guyon affords an odd exemplification; self-denial became to her so great an enjoyment, that she actually began at last to indulge, as a new way of penance. Give me a letter soon. God bless you!

"Yours affectionately,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 22.)

"Norwich, August 2, 1801.

"Dear Robert Southey,

'Everywhere magic! The Arabian's heart
Yearn'd after human intercourse.'

"Such an exclamation may escape the reader

of 'Thallaba,' and will not escape the reader of 'Oberon.' What Huon undertakes is mixed up and ornamented with miracle and magic; but he is full of the loveliest qualities of human nature. If Sherasmin attaches himself to Huon suddenly, it is because to a handsome young nobleman, who speaks Gascon and is son to his old master, the unwilling hermit would and must attach himself with all that devotion. Suppose the storm in Oberon's park, and the relative behaviour of Huon and Sherasmin is exactly what it must be: —suppose the dream, and Huon must fall in love, and Sherasmin laugh at it as the nightmare, &c. The whole is a story of a runaway match, where the lovers fall in love and adhere to each other in adversity, precisely for the same reasons that men and women of the better sort do so attach and so conduct themselves. The elves are but the scene-shifters: suppose them guineas personified—they provide palaces to sup and sleep in while their power lasts, a mean hovel and manual labour when it is withdrawn; but every volition of the heroes has its adequate cause in such likes and dislikes as *men* feel. 'Thallaba,' on the contrary, is a talismanic statue, of whose joints capricious destiny pulls the strings, who with a forgiving temper undertakes a work of vengeance, and who is moved here and there one knows not why or wherefore: he, for this reason, interests (I sus-

pect) little; and one is quite satisfied with a catastrophe which buries him under the ruins of his antagonists. One cannot enough praise the expression and paintingness of the style, that realization to the mind of the thing described, that lyric plasticity of manner and sympathetic metamorphosis of diction, that omnipotence of phrase,—

> 'That changed through all and yet in all the same,
> Great in the earth as in the æthereal frame,
> Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
> Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees.'

"I did not much expect you would seriously think of *settling here*: I thought it likely enough that you should be hesitating between a temporary residence at Bristol, or at Hampstead, or in Westmoreland, and that (like Buridan's ass, which, because there is nice hay on both sides, touches neither bundle, but stoops down to crop thistles) you might very probably come hither for a twelvemonth to finish 'Mohammed,' or whatever other nest-egg is to be hatched against next summer. Your not making Henry and me just a visit is not praiseworthy; at the news the smile forsook our cheek. The only good reason you give is that you have no leisure, no time to spare from intended and expedient literary occupations.

"Remember me to Mr. Coleridge when you

see him,—not that I know him, but we have interchanged a letter or two; he gave me his address in London, and I sought for him there with great eagerness; unfortunately he was already set off for Westmoreland, and I missed the pleasure of an interview. It gives me pain to hear of his ill-health, and that he too sighs for the south.

"I think you would do well to give your 'Madoc' now to Longman and Rees, and to build your edifice of immortal name on the Hindoo ground. You have told and written me much of 'Madoc,' but it seemed to me to offer insufficient scope for mythological ornament, and to be too much associated with the cause and interests of pantisocratic philosophy to obtain an undivided suffrage of approbation. Take the Hindoo superstitions for your machinery, and your country here and your readers there have both an interest in its celebrity, which must grow with the national power and extend with the national empire. It may be one of those works which the masters of mankind will praise; and you are not now to be told, that to consult the interests of the governing class in the general structure and tendency of your fable and sentiments, is one of the main causes of that comprehensive, permanent and overpowering popularity, which is the utmost attainable aim of

fame-fanciers. Tasso will lose a little, Milton more, and Klopstock most, of his celebrity, if Christianity should sink from an European religion to an European sect; but those actions which are not stimulated by opinions, such as Homer's, &c., retain an interest coeval with the human phænomena they describe, commensurate with the fidelity and importance of the delineation, co-extensive with the memory of the event, and conspicuous with the fashion of the language. Ready for the press in six months, is not the condition for everlasting productions. I admit that the outline, the sketch, cannot be too soon made; but the finishing, the pruning, the bringing out of the better figures,—the condensation of prate into oratory, the concatenation of incident into event, the obumbration of description into appendage, is not the work of half a year. My ideas of perfection desperate attempt, but your ardour of execution endangers completeness; it is after all more honourable to want the curb than the spur. Write your grand work at Palermo. Henry is well.

"The journey to Kaf pleases me more than the voyage in book 11.

"Yours,

"William Taylor, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 21.)

" London, Wednesday night, Nov. 11, 1801.

" My dear Friend,

" Amid the bustle and everlasting motion in which of late I have been engaged, I have neglected to apprize you of my goings on, partly indeed trusting that Henry would learn everything worth knowing from his mother. Soon after my letter to him I joined my friends in Wales. We made what was designed to be our first journey, which terminated at Llangedwin, Wynn's abode: there I found a letter inviting me to Ireland, to become Corry's private secretary for one year,—the term prudently limited, lest we should not suit each other ; the proffered salary £400 Irish (about £350 English), of which the half was specified as travelling expenses. After touching at Keswick twice, on my road to and from Dublin, here I am in my scribe-capacity. My friend Rickman's acquaintance with Corry brought this about: he is secretary to Abbot, and his residence in Dublin will render my Irish half-year very endurable, as he is one of the men whom I most esteem for his whole moral and intellectual character.

" I have been a week in town, and in that time have learnt something. The civilities which already have been shown me discover how much

I have been abhorred for all that is valuable in my nature: such civilities excite more contempt than anger, but they make me think more despicably of the world than I would wish to do. As if this were a baptism that purified me of all sins,—a regeneration; and the one congratulates me, and the other visits me, as if the author of 'Joan of Arc' and of 'Thalaba' were made a great man by scribing for the Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer.

"I suppose my situation by all these symptoms to be a good one,—for a more ambitious man doubtless very desirable, though the ladder is longer than I design to climb. My principles and habits are happily enough settled; my objects in life are leisure to do nothing but write, and competence to write at leisure; and my notions of competence do not exceed £300 a year. Mr. Corry is a man of gentle and reconciling manners: fitter men for his purpose he doubtless might have found in some respects, none more so in regularity and dispatch. The newspapers I hear are at me: I am used to flea-bites, and never scratch a pimple to a sore.

"Doubtless you have seen the British Critic review of 'Thalaba'; it is so perfect in its kind, that I have no doubt in ascribing it to Sir Herbert Croft. The personality in the Monthly Review I cannot so easily account for. Dr. Geddes

has been whispered to me, but I hardly credit the whisper; for never having seen the man, I cannot have offended him. I recollect not whether or no I thanked you for your judgement of 'Thalaba,' and acceded to its censure in great part. As far as I can judge by what reaches my own ear, the poem has been successful to its fair deserts,—that is, in the character it is gaining: of the sale I yet know nothing.

"Burnett is at work for Phillips: the young warrior fights under a veteran's shield, and his bantlings are to be fathered by no less a personage than Dr. Mavor,—head-journeyman to Edmund Curl the second. For this trade—a miserable trade—George Burnett is noways qualified: he overrates his own powers, and everybody else underrates them. My advice to him has been—turn usher or tutor, and give your leisure to asserting your literary character: to this he will not stoop. At present he has employment; but he neither calculates rightly on its precariousness, nor on his own fitness and ability to discharge it. His knowledge is not ready; like the Bank, it has cash, but, alas! not payable on demand.

"I wait my books and papers before I can be comfortably industrious, to correct 'Madoc' and proceed with the 'Curse of Kehama.' These

are to be my leisure labours; both with the hope of long escaping the press, for some half-dozen reasons, of which the wisest is, that the longer they remain the higher value they will acquire; not merely from the gradual correction, the ripening of crude fruit, but because my own character as a poet will strengthen, like a retired player's. My time is sold at a better price than the booksellers would have given for it.

"Do you come to London this winter? If I had the wishing-cap I would see you at Norwich, a place of which all remembrance is pleasurable. Farewell!

"Yours affectionately,

"Robert Southey."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 23.)

"Dear Friend, "Norwich, November 14, 1801.

"I had been wishing to hear from you. I like better your present plan of providing for yourself than the Palermitan. The idea of a perfect maintenance will never, I fear, be realized; yours approaches it as nearly as on the average is probable.

"Your Mr. May is a very amiable man; there is so much heart in his letters, that I would undertake a long pilgrimage to know him. I count

of going to London in the spring, in order to go on to Richmond. I project also to get once more to Paris.

"Why will you not come to Norwich? Do you know that it is the worst symptom about your rise that you ignore your former friends there, and do not give them credit for rejoicing in it? You would else seek their congratulations.

"The British Critic review of 'Thallaba' I saw, and think it likely to come from Sir H. C.; but the account in the Monthly escaped me wholly, yet I had the Review in my turn. What month contains it? Of the secret history of the M. R. I know nothing now that I have quarrelled with Griffiths, or rather with his son, who has been in the volunteer cavalry, and approximates nearer to government politics than the more honest-principled and learned, but now superannuated father. You must turn over the Critical to us unpromoted politicians; we shall else have no mouth-piece. You would do well to introduce Henry there: reviewing is very favourable to reading with observation: it forms the style; it accustoms to selection; it impresses a thousand facts and opinions which would else be skimmed over; it necessitates the profounder investigation of a thousand minutenesses which it is proper to search into; above all, it generates a habit of literary application,

which he is in danger of not acquiring. To mingle drugs and visit patients and pace to the hospital all the morning, and run into company, where he is but too acceptable, all the afternoon, is not enough; he ought to labour more at acquirements of mind.

"Burnett wrote to me for a letter to Dr. Aikin that might favour his obtaining literary employment. I would always wish to speak the truth with urbanity: I told him, 'Accustomed as I have been to look *up* to Mr. Burnett's eminence as a scholar, and to desiderate the *unaffected* graces of his style, it is natural I should rate them highly.' I suspect the panegyric was not strong enough, for I have never heard from Burnett since; and as I underlined nothing, I thought it read very glibly.

"The ladies cannot endure the metre of 'Thallaba'; it is more convenient to the poet than agreeable to the reader. Berime it, and they will bepraise it. It is too descriptive for the men; they want morality in axiomatic sentences, and human passions in strong conflict. I wonder you do not republish your minor poems in a single volume of the same size as the 'Joan' and the 'Thallaba,' omitting all those which are feeble or of temporary value, as poetical reputation depends more on the exquisiteness than the quantity of production.

"What think you of the Pope's coming to Rheims to anoint Bonaparte? The antigallicans are turning liberty-men from antijacobins, as they were, and the liberty-men are turning antigallicans. Does not this forebode the nationalization of liberty-politics at home? Shall we not see the Mackintoshes archimages of Hindostan, and the admirers of Babœuf chancellors of the exchequer?

"Yours,

"WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 22.)

"London, Thursday, November 19, 1801.

"My dear Friend,

"I have perhaps and probably enough interest in the Critical Review to insert any puff of decent praise and brevity, but there my interest ends. Once I attempted to introduce a friend there, who would have been a very Goliath or Samson, but no notice was taken of my application.

"Supposing a new Review were set on foot, would you like to amuse your leisure by assisting it? I could, I think, present such a list of names as would encourage any bookseller to the adventure, if there were but an approvable conductor. It is one of the schemes upon which

Coleridge and I have speculated in conversation, and it made the distinguishing character of our scheme, that authors should be allowed to give an account of their own works first, limited to a certain length, and produce extracts themselves. A little attention to decency would secure it a decided advantage over the existing journals: Davy would be our chemist; for financial, commercial, and agricultural subjects, I think Rickman might be put down, a most original-minded and strong-headed man, who is quite my oracle; here too we might find a niche for poor Burnett. A manager seems the stumbling-block, and it is one which I cannot remove. Phillips would at once start it, but that would involve it with the Aikin family, and we are oil and vinegar; all the shaking possible could never amalgamate two particles. This scheme is not uppermost in my head, and yet I could take an interest in its success.

"If reviewing were, as it ought to be, merely analytical, or according to any fair and written canons of criticism, I should be glad to see Henry so employed; as it is, I doubt his knowledge, and should scruple to introduce a boy of eighteen to such an employment, if it were in my power,—a foolish scruple perhaps, when the work is so foolishly done. If he can make anything by writing, of course it would please me:

I wish him to learn to write, and profit is perhaps the only adequate motive. He is reading Italian; could he criticise the authors he reads in that language decently enough for insertion in the Dissenters' Obituary, alias the Monthly Magazine? Some two or three years back there were some Zoilan, but really able papers, hewing down the laurels from the graves of Dante and Petrarch and Ariosto; it would exercise him well to see what could be said in defence of the 'Orlando.' I know his love for such books. To trace the history and progress of that noble poem would amuse him, and his notes would swell into a tolerable size. Turpin, Boyardo in his own dress and that of Berni, the scyons round the root of Ariosto, these books would induce a love of research: the Spanish part of the history, the Roncevalles poems, he might look to me for. You have these hints as they arise, and will know better than I can do, how far my scheme is fit for Henry, and whether he be capable of it.

"'Thallaba' (as you will have the double *l* to please your ear, take it in spite of my eye) has not been Monthly-reviewed; I alluded to the reviews of the 'Anthology,' and to the sprinkling of abuse in other articles. I learn from its publication that novelty is not always a source of pleasure; for if my ear be not as unsusceptible of poetry as it is of music, that metre is more

perceptible than common blank verse, and more readable by common readers, because the pause is more made out for them.

"I design soon to draw out the scheme of my Hindoo romance and lay it upon your dissecting-table. Fault-finding with the story would be serviceable to it, and alteration would be attended with little trouble, as the first book is not finished. You and I differ upon one great article of poetical belief,—the use of machinery. In Milton and in Klopstock (God forgive me for yoking two such names together! Ulysses did not plough with two more dissimilar beasts) the supernaturals are the agents, the figures, not the wires. Thus also in the romance of my future manufactory, Indra, Yamen, and the Sorgon spirits, the two families of light and darkness, the gods and heroes of Valhalla, these are to be the acting as well as aiding personages of the tale: for Madoc I assume a higher tone and demand a higher place.

"You think me better situated than at Palermo; I do not feel the advantage. Southern climate is very much to me; it blends with all my comforts, and makes no inconsiderable part of them. Moreover, the utmost possible hope now is a decent income in Ireland, and surely Sicily is the more interesting and more lovely island, as much as an orange-garden is better than a patch

of potatoes in a bog. My wish would be to settle in Portugal of all other possible situations, but that is not possible, at least not now; so I take what I can get, and grumble at nothing but my compulsory residence in London, which I do loathe and abhor with all my moral and physical feelings.

"Farewell! Yours,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 24.)

"Norwich, November 22, 1801.

"My dear Friend,

"Henry will have sent you my reviewal of * * *; if it merits an exordium in prose, you must supply one.

"I wish Henry to learn to write, still more I wish him to acquire the habit of application. If I get Phillips to receive his voluntaries in the Monthly Magazine, he will know that trash will *do*, and will take the less pains; and he will know that it will do *at any time*, and procrastinate; but in the Critical neither of these excuses will avail.

"As to a new Review, I do not think it would succeed: both the Monthly and the Critical are in the main well conducted, and as low in their politics as the times will yet patronize. To vie

with the British Critic or the Antijacobin will not be the amusement of *my* leisure. I think a new Magazine, on the plan of the 'Magazin Encyclopédique,' without any of those epitomes of newspapers, states of public affairs, marriages and deaths, clippings off letters, and booksellers' advertisements, which cram with insignificance the Gentleman's and the Monthly, would be of more probable success. I do not see why Burnett could not manage it; and it might, like the 'Magazin Encyclopédique,' answer the purpose of a Review of books large enough to write a dissertation upon. It had better not be called a magazine, but 'Literary Collections,' or 'Hermeia' (road-finds in German-English), or 'Cornucopia,' &c. The steady courage to print no trash for two whole years would insure success, and every two months would be often enough for publication: but where find this steady courage, the knowledge that must guide, the resources that must back, the ill-nature that must perpetuate it? Burnett would be too indulgent.

"You seem very desirous of guessing out the writer of those articles in the Monthly respecting the 'Anthology.' I know nothing of the matter; my suggestions will be wholly hypothetical; but were I to guess, it would be thus: a similar tone of taste pervades the reviewal of the 'Anthology' and of Delille's 'Homme des

Champs' ; Delille has been much at the house of Mr. Mackintosh, reciting his poetry there, and Mr. Mackintosh speaks of Delille and his poetry very much with the sentiments of the Monthly Review. There is reason to believe that Mr. and Mrs. Mackintosh between them furnish a good deal of copy to Griffiths. The works of taste probably come under the lady's department, but the family opinion will overspread the writings of either ; and that opinion, now that it is become antijacobin, may have inspired harsh personalities.

" Klopstock has ruined his poem by making the supernaturals the agents : Milton only obtains an interest in behalf of his supernatural personages, inasmuch as he humanizes them ; his devils are more man-like than his Adam and Eve. I do not object to a theo-drama or to an epic poem, where all the actors are gods ; but I contend that the marvellous must be confined to physical properties, and that the unmotived in action, the marvellous in conduct, the extravagant in behaviour,—in a word, *the insane*,—ceases to be an object of artistical imitation, and always displeases. Everybody complains, and will for ever complain, of the talismanic statues in 'Thalaba' ; they excite no interest. 'Joan of Arc,' 'Theodore,' tremble on the brink, or rather hover on the verge of what I call super-

naturalism, that is, moral improbability,—the being moved by motives which do not usually move. These characters, however, are only bold, not strange; and will for ever appear to heroic natures possible, and to feeling natures affecting existences. The personages of your Hindoo romances, whether you call them gods or men, must not be mere pegs to hang descriptions upon, but must have human characters and passions; and the more vulgarly unrestrained, unbridled and boisterous, the more free-agent and unpolished, like the barons bold of the heroic ages, the more direct and obvious and sensual their wants and their wishes, the more will these personages secure sympathy: not the monstrous and extraordinary, the average or common form is the fittest subject of imitation.

"Another preachment: there is in 'Thalaba' a sort of pantomime scene-shifting; harlequin touches the landscape with his wand, and it becomes a palace of flame or a desert of snow, but *cui bono*? Why this specific change and not another diametrically opposite? There must be a tendency to attain an end even in the scenery; wherefore we prefer the opera to the pantomime, where the same variety has its motive and can be accounted for. Another — . Wait, blot, borrow, more.

"Yours,

"William Taylor, Jun."

From various passages in this correspondence, it is apparent that William Taylor did not think very highly of the poetry collected in the 'Anthology'; and as the work was discontinued after the second volume, public opinion seems to have confirmed his judgement. For severe critics and refined tastes, many of the compositions were too trifling; while for the general class of readers it wanted that variety of subject, that grace of costume and splendour of decoration, to which the Annuals of the present day owe their popularity. Still the most eminent contributors have thought their pieces, which first appeared in that publication, worthy of being preserved in subsequent editions of their poems. The only portion of the second volume furnished by William Taylor is the eclogue in hexameters at page 200. His imitation of Chatterton was inserted in the Monthly Magazine, for which periodical the number and diversity of his productions can scarcely be paralleled by those of any other writer*. The list

* During the years 1800 and 1801 the Monthly Magazine contained the following papers from his pen:—

Vol. IX.

1. On the Celtic Origin of Romance, Rime, and Chivalry.
2. On the Meaning of the term Recluse.
3. On the Origin of the Fable of Oberon, from the French Romance, Huon of Bordeaux.
4. On the Correspondence between C. J. Fox and Bertrand de Moleville.

5. On

in the subjoined note will show that few subjects were beyond the grasp of his mind, and will increase our regret that the indefatigability of research and quickness of observation, which were thus diffused in such desultory inquiries, were not concentrated upon one main and absorbing object. It has often been remarked by those who watched his progress, that in his dispersed

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5. On the Origin of the Jewish Feast of Purim and History of Esther.

6. A Statement of the Theological Opinions of Servetus.

7. On the Design of Pym to place the Elector Palatine on the Throne of Charles I.

8. Translations of Ramler's Odes to Winter, to Kings, and to Concord; prefaced by an account of that poet.

9. Portfolio of a Man of Letters.

10. Articles of Literary and Philosophical Intelligence.

Vol. X.

1. Chronological Inquiry relative to the Siege of Nineveh.

2. On the Toleration of the Jews in Prussia.

3. On the Opinions of the Jews respecting the Immortality of the Soul.

4. Translation from Goethe.

5. On the Chronology of Jewish History.

6. Fragment of Wortegerne, or More Reliques of Rowley.

7. An Explanation of the Apocalypse.

8. Translations in hexameter verse from Klopstock's Messiah.

9. Various articles in the Portfolio of a Man of Letters.

Vol. XI.

1. On the Writings and Readings of Jude.

2. Anecdotes of Goethe.

3. On Sylphs.

4. Remarks

writings there are talent and learning enough to have built up a score of reputations. His English hexameter versions of some of the most striking passages in Klopstock's 'Messiah,' which are included in this list, are undoubtedly the finest specimens of that kind of writing in our language, and in impressive sublimity surpass the original: an entire work so written, or even

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4. Remarks on the Book of Enoch in the Coptic Version of the Hebrew Scriptures brought from Abyssinia by Bruce.

5. Anecdotes of Herder.

6. Introduction to Goethe's Masque of Palæophron and Neoterpe.

7. On the Education of Dissenting Ministers.

8. Portfolio of a Man of Letters (4 papers).

9. Comments on Mason's Supplement to Johnson's Dictionary (2 papers).

10. Half-yearly Retrospect of German Literature.

Vol. XII.

1. Comments on Mason's Supplement to Johnson's Dictionary (3 papers).

2. Counterplaint. A defence of his peculiar spellings of some words which had been altered by the printer, and which he justified on etymological principles.

3. On a Hebrew Dirge.

4. On the Fables of Pignotti. (See Philosophical and Literary Intelligence.)

5. Various articles in the Portfolio of a Man of Letters; among which may be particularly noticed those on Sneezing, on Wax-work, and on the Henriade, pp. 224, 421 and 423.

6. Half-yearly Retrospect of Domestic Literature; being a general reviewal of all the principal English works published during the last six months of 1801.

so translated, would have ranked him among the immortal poets of the world. These fragments are preserved in his 'Historic Survey of German Poetry,' and to the latest period of his life he would often recite portions of them with a feeling and emphasis, that never failed to produce the deepest effect upon those who heard him*.

* The following letter from the proprietor of the Monthly Magazine affords further proof of the estimation in which his services were held:—

"Dear Sir, "71, St. Paul's, March 6th, 1800.

"On the other side your account is stated at six guineas per sheet: that the annual amount is not greater must be ascribed to your having sent me only three or four papers during the first *nine* months of the year. I am always glad to hear from you, and hope you will be a more frequent, and indeed a constant contributor in prose and verse. Southey does not want originals. Another Enquirer would be very acceptable, and another, and another still. The two Necrology articles will be used in our next volume.

"I am, dear Sir, very faithfully,
"Your obliged friend,
"R. Phillips."

The account to which the foregoing letter refers, exhibits a curious view of the ill-proportioned remuneration obtained for the materials of periodicals, when it is regulated solely by the space which they fill. The following are the sums received by William Taylor for some of these writings:—

	£	s.	d.
The Translation of Bürger's Lenore.....	0	6	0
The Translation of Klopstock's Ode to Recovery.....	0	2	0

	£	s.	d.
The Translation of Voss's Idyll, The Devil in Ban	0	11	0
The Translation of Stolberg's Theseus	1	4	0
The paper on Modern Jesuitism	1	13	6
The paper on Antinomianism	0	14	0
The paper on the Theory of Representation	1	11	6
The paper, The Enquirer, No. 19	1	13	6

From the same document it appears that he wrote the Memoir of Bürger in the 'Annual Necrology' for 1799, and had also prepared two other articles for the next volume. The subjects of these are not known, as the work for which they were designed was discontinued.

CHAPTER VII.

1802 to 1803.

MR. TAYLOR'S VISIT TO PARIS. EDITORSHIP OF THE IRIS. CORRESPONDENCE CONTINUED.

In February 1802, William Taylor received a visit in Norwich from his friend Robert Southey, who consulted him upon his then unfinished poem of 'Madoc'; and in the following month he availed himself of the short interval of tranquillity that succeeded the treaty of Amiens to go over to France, where he remained till the summer. During his stay at Paris he was joined by his young favourite, the present Dr. Henry Southey, in whom, as has been seen from the foregoing correspondence, he took the liveliest interest, and to whom he manifested all the kindness and watchfulness of a parent. He was furnished with a letter of introduction to Lafayette, at whose chateau he spent some days, and of whom, as well as of his family, he communicated many striking particulars to his friends in England. These, and his general observations upon the state of France and the effects produced by the Revolution, give more than ordinary importance to this part of his correspondence.

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 23.)

"35 Strand, Saturday, February 6, 1802.

"My dear Friend,

"I did not till yesterday receive your note, at an hour too late to answer it. I have been confined to the house, therefore not able to look for my letters, and Corry, being himself unwell, neglected to send them. A letter which I wrote this day week to Harry explained my delay in setting off for Norwich: I hope to see you in the course of the following week. Your letter is a very kind one; almost I could find fault with some part of it for its too much civility. John May sends by me some cigars and two glass pipes of the last fashion; they tempt me to learn to smoke.

"Perhaps you know not the news of Burnett: he had been only a week with Lord Stanhope when his two pupils eloped, enticed away by an elder sister, who avows what she has done; and affirms that Lord Stanhope's groom, who was the go-between, is rewarded with a place under government. The father is severely afflicted; I think more so than becomes a philosopher. He appears attached to Burnett, has taken him aside, and said that his situation must not be at an end. He hopes to recover the youngest boy; and if not, 'I hope,' said he, 'Mr. Burnett, it

will be a very long time before you leave me: I never make promises, but rather like to perform.' George was in town upon this business.

"Our news is that the King wishes obstinately to retire from all public business, and that this has been the cause of the frequent adjournments. Two Cornish men are in town to procure a patent for a carriage driven by steam: as it succeeds in Cornwall, Bonaparte may bespeak some for his next march across the Alps. Davy and Sir Joseph Banks between them have found out that the Terra Japonica is pure tannine: I fear this will not lessen the price of shoe-leather, though it must make the fortune of the first tanners who profit by it. I will put 'Madoc' in my trunk, that you may see it in its crude state and advise me about the bear before I lick him into shape. History employs most of my time, and that very delightfully: the easy idleness of research suits me well; silk-worm-like, I prefer eating to spinning.

"Godwin is married,—to a widow with one child: I am not disposed to be pleased with a second Mrs. Godwin. He is about the 'History of the Life and Times of Geoffry Chaucer,' for Phillips. A great metaphysical book is conceived and about to be born. Thomas Wedgewood the Jupiter whose brain is parturient—Mackintosh the man-midwife—a preface on the

history of metaphysical opinions promised by Coleridge. This will perhaps prove an abortion, and be bottled up among other rarities in the moon. It has, however, proceeded so far as to disturb the spiders, whose hereditary claim to Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus had not been disputed for many a year before. Time and Space are the main subjects of speculation. I am afraid the book will add nothing to what I have already learnt from the clocks and the milestones. God bless you!

"Yours thankfully and truly,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 24.)

"My dear Friend, "35 Strand, Feb. 26, 1802.

"Last night John May transmitted to me your letter: as it is now on its way back, I infer that an answer from me will reach you one day sooner than it could from him, and hope delayed I know by experience to be among the damnabilia,—the Ahriman-works of this world. So Harry gets his first passport, and I wish him well through the toll-gates of Mr. Martineau and the Secretary of State. Just at his age I had planned a week's amusement in France, and actually embarked twice from Rye; the wind prevented my voyage, and this is one of the very

few circumstances in my life which I remember with regret.

"I long to show you the λέοντες μέγιστοι of my catalogue,—Davy and Coleridge and Rickman, whom we expect in town.

"Thank you for helping a lame dog over a stile in the Monthly Magazine; and thank you, William Taylor, for your kindness to Harry, as warmly and truly and affectionately as he himself can do it.

"God bless you!

"Robert Southey."

"N.B. Cigars in the cupboard. Whatever I may deserve on this head, *exit in fumum* will be the end of it, I hope."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 25.)

"Norwich, March 1, 1802.

"There are objections, my dear Robert, to your brother's *accompanying* me to Paris; I have some commercial matters to mind, and may be detained on the road, which would be a mere loss of time to him. I do not very well know on what sort of footing I shall be at Paris, how pleasantly introduced and the like; and think it more convenient to feel out my way alone, and afterwards to avail myself of my acquaintances in his favour, than to impose two attentions in the first instance. From my cousin John Dyson, who

lived with Lafayette as agricultural teacher, I have introductions to that family, which may bring on a stay at Lagrange; I could not well take Henry thither, and would not leave him alone at Paris. Mr. Martineau, with whom I have since yesterday talked about our plan, prefers sparing him a month hence. It is difficult for persons circumstanced like Henry and me to undertake a whole journey on a footing of equality; I must sink into the preceptor or he into the humble friend,—neither relation accommodates either: his joining me leaves to each the complete air of independence. Henry's schoolfellow and friend R., who has already travelled in Germany, is very likely to join Henry in this trip, and is a proper escort. These reasons, and in conversation I can give you still more, lead me to think I exert a sound discretion in saying, let him *follow* me; the Piccadilly Diligence will guide them safe. It is, however, but too problematical whether we are either of us to go at all; such are the obstacles to passports, that Porson, who requested a passport to Paris to collate manuscripts, has been refused. I presume the probabilities of a new war increase. Henry undertakes to remove himself to and fro; he is to be my guest while there. I shall call on you on Wednesday morning about twelve.

"Yours,

"William Taylor, Jun."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 26.)

" Dear Friend, " Paris, April 17, 1802.

" I have been writing to Henry to invite him hither, and hope he will be allowed to come; indeed I shall suspect that Mr. Martineau thinks me an improper superintendent if he says no.

" I am indisposed with a complaint which the waters of the Seine or the small Burgundy are famous for producing*. . . . . Is there no extracting good out of evil? If passports are still necessary, might not Henry Herbert Southey, Surgeon, solicit a passport to attend and conduct back to England a sick friend? I recommend that the passport be applied for by a resident housekeeper in London, not by the party himself; and that the application be made in writing (as indeed every application even for an interview must be at the Alien Office) as soon as possible. It is a truism which I wish to impress, that if Henry and I are to return together, the sooner he comes the longer he will stay. I shall be returned from the country before he can arrive.

" Of the towns I have passed through, Montreuil alone exhibits symptoms of declension. A congress of devils might feast there upon the

* Never perhaps was any unpleasant bodily affection described with so much genuine humour and classical allusion as that which, being designed solely for the eye of a friend, is here omitted.

spectacle of five churches in ruins: but on Sunday next their joy will cease; and the resurrection of Christianity, as of Christ, will be celebrated by a stupendous oratorio before those altars where the goddess Reason collected not long ago her impudent worshippers. I shall be at Notre Dame on the occasion.

"This government is much and justly esteemed; but it is not an heroic monarchy, as is supposed. Had Pompey prevailed over Cæsar, he might have cashiered at pleasure the tribunes of the people, and appointed other representatives of the superior will; but if Pompey had attempted to supersede that senate which called in his aid for its conservative purposes, some Sertorius, or more docile agent of the patricians, would have been intrusted with the command of the commonwealth.

"Paris is more beautiful than before: one misses here and there an equestrian statue, but in general the taste and magnificence of the public edifices far surpass those of London. The houses of the Miltiades may not be distinguishable from those of other citizens, but whatever belongs to the public is worthy of a great nation. Is private luxury or public luxury the more happy-making possession? Private. Then *vivat* London. "Yours,

"WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

William Taylor to Thomas Dyson.

"Paris, 6 Floreal (May 25), 1802.

"Dear Cousin,

"Thank your brother again and again for me, for his agreeable introduction to the family of Lafayette. Henry and I went last week a tour of three days, and spent part of them at Lagrange. It is a sweet spot. The old stone castle has the form of a Greek Pi, Π: towers with conic roofs terminate the four corners. You pass a bridge to enter the gothic gate, and find yourself in a court open to the west; the moat is in part filled up, and is about to assume the form of a passing rivulet. Fine woods shade the southern lawn, which is bordered on the east by an old alley of lime-trees, that conceal a large walled garden. The stables and appendages are on the north-east, where an orchard is about to be brought to bear. The ground is flat, very flat; but it is full of trees, and the taste of the owner is giving it the appearance of an English park. The basin of the ancient *jet d'eau* is filled up, and irregular vistas are breaking into the dark circle of wood. Some tall oaks have been singled out on the lawn. In the round saloon of the south-west tower we breakfast; hither we return after dinner at six, to wait the late nocturnal tea, which is a substitute (all over Paris also)

for sandwiches or supper. This room is decorated with four paintings: 1. a view of the arrival at some American port of that ship which Lafayette at his own expense equipped to carry succour to the army of Washington; 2. the demolition of the Bastille; 3. the Federation; 4. a portrait of the young Lafayette in his first uniform. In the round room of the south-east tower is the library of Lafayette; in works on agricultural and political topics, both French and English, it chiefly abounds. Both these rooms (and two of the three windows are diametrically opposite) are imparadised in luxury of prospect. Of the family you know nearly all I can say,—how much they are all heart, all affection for each other, for their neighbours, for mankind. It will give your brother pain that Madame Lafayette has a complaint in her ancle which obliges her to lay up the leg: Anastasia recollects him with interest, and desired me to tell him of her two children, whom she presented to me; her name is Maubourg. George Lafayette is about to marry Miss Tracy, a daughter of the author of a book on ideology, which has drawn attention in the metaphysical world; she is likely to inherit a thousand a year. The family come this week to Paris to make the preparations; the young couple are to live at Lagrange with the Lafayette family. Virginia Lafayette

is about seventeen apparently, and has the northern beauty of a very exquisite complexion and pale hair; she too speaks English as well as her brother and sister. Madame D'Arblay, Miss Burney that was, happened to be at the house: I wish she may paint in some future novel this model of a family. The bed-chambers are furnished with a simplicity which struck me at first as nakedness, but I learnt to perceive that not the minutest wish was unforeseen; that the two chairs were enough; that pen, ink, paper, shaving-glass were all at hand. Before breakfast Lafayette took me over his farm,—about three hundred acres of yellowish clayey land, which crevices in the sun; some of it is blue and springy; near the house there is black meadow soil. The Duke of Bedford's ghost might have listened with interest to our conversation, for we talked of agriculture, of liberty, and him; but he would have listened with a sneer to my agriculture, though not to Lafayette's politics. I was, however, obliged to answer questions about the farm at Gunton*; and having by great good-luck fancied that beans would grow on the stiffer and bluer upland, which resembles the field where the cottages stood at Gunton, and that under-draining would be of immense

* The residence of Mr. John Dyson, near Lowestoff, in Suffolk.

service to a field of yellow wheat where two profuse sources distil, and that the roof of a condemned sheep-stall was too low, and that the milk-trays in the dairy should be fleet and superficial, not pail-shaped, because the formation of cream is accompanied with the absorption of oxygen from the atmosphere, I was presented to his farmer as Sir Oracle; had to examine the waggon and the plough (with whose form I am dissatisfied), and to corroborate the propriety of several predetermined alterations which were a little in danger of local contradiction. The urbanity of Lafayette's manner is unusual: he is as polite to the peasant as to the prefect, yet you know not if his republicanism or his benevolence be predominant; for though he behaves to every one as to an equal, he employs as much effort to conciliate the good-will as a courtier would toward a superior. After breakfast we strolled in the grove, after dinner in the villages about,—but I shall come to Diss and tell you all that.

"This *Concordat*, or re-establishment of religion, is found to operate in behalf of Protestantism. At Arles a knot of seven hundred persons, formerly Catholics, have written to Nismes for a Protestant minister; the congregation of M. Marron here has received accessions; and parents bring children five or six years old, who

during the atheism of the magistrate had received no baptism, to be baptized and registered by the Protestants. Mr. Russell of Birmingham has founded at the chateau he bought a Protestant meeting-house, and it thrives. The Lutherans, who abound along the German frontier, are not on the increase so sensibly as the Calvinists in connection with Geneva and Nismes; but these Calvinists are not, like English Methodists, sticklers for mystical doctrines, but in a high degree rationalized, and in fact a sort of theophilanthropic Christians, like the English Socinians.

"The French character seems to me much altered, and in an English direction; the people are more circumspect, less prateful, more indifferent about each other, less officious, more neat and plain in dress, less irascible and fitful in temper, with their inferiors less familiar but less insolent. The lower orders in Paris are more at their ease; the wages of labour have risen a full third, and the price of consumables has not augmented in proportion. In the country wages have risen less, hardly a fourth; but the exemption from *corvées* and feudal dues and services, and the prodigious facilitation of territorial purchases, has there too bettered the condition of the vulgar immensely. The actual levy of a hundred and twenty thousand men compels

each *commune* to furnish two men and a fraction; these communes consist of consolidated parishes, often of more than three, so that the conscription is scarcely felt, nor have substitutes ever cost much more than in England. Paris is embellished; and, bating the picturesque effect of churches in ruin, exhibits few symptoms of the past storm.

"I dined at Holcroft's with Tom Paine, and met there a Mr. Manning, a friend of Robert Woodhouse, with whom I soon became—I may now say, I think—intimate. In power of mind and amiableness of temper he has few equals; he is a superior mathematician and Grecian, and is learning Chinese. We have found out that we both know every tree on Diss Common, and consider the water-lilies of the Waveney as 'redolent of joy and *youth*,'—in short, he is your rector's son*.

* Mr. Thomas Manning was the friend and correspondent of Charles Lamb, to whom he suggested the first idea of the 'Origin of Roasted Pig,' one of the most amusing among the Essays of Elia. (See the Letters of Charles Lamb, edited by Serjeant Talfourd, vol. ii. p. 94.) His mathematical attainments at Cambridge, his proficiency in Oriental languages, and his long residence in China and Thibet, entitle him to rank among the remarkable men of his age. On his return to Europe he brought with him much original and highly interesting information respecting countries so difficult of access and little known; and those who were aware of his opportunities and talent for observation have long regretted that the

"Remember me to your near and my dear neighbours, and believe me

"Affectionately yours,

"WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

The following letters were addressed at this time to Thomas Martin, Esq., of Liverpool. The first of them, contrary to William Taylor's habitual precision, has no date, but was probably written while he was yet in France; the other soon after his return to Norwich.

"My dear Martin,

"I am afraid to begin telling you about my journey, because a narrative *en détail* would be too much for me, and *en gros* uninteresting to you. Calais is just what it was: the style of building strikes as being more roomy and gentlemanlike than the squeezed, cabin-parloured houselets of Dover; but there is not that cram-

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results of his persevering researches have been withheld from the public. It is to be hoped that by his death, which took place at Bath in the early part of May 1840, his papers have passed into hands which will prepare them for the press. The intimacy between William Taylor and Mr. Manning, of which the commencement is here related, was only interrupted by the long years which the latter spent in distant lands; it was renewed after his return to England, and he seldom visited his family connexions at Diss without enjoying for a few days the society and converse of his friend at Norwich.

medness of population, that emulous industry, that air of thrift. The French contempt for gothic architecture already appears in the Doric portal to the old cathedral, in the modern front to the municipality, and in the incipient degradation of the gate to the Cour de Guise. Boulogne is what it was. I had not leisure to see our friend Masclet, who is prefect there; I could only run along the rampart and begaze the site of Lord Nelson's misemployment. Abbeville is nearly what it was, very full of beggars, and in a sort of regular decline: two fine gothic steeples ought to be drawn by our artists. Amiens flourishes as it used to do: in its truly beautiful gothic cathedral there are effacements both of royalistical and pietistical inscriptions, which during the atheism of the magistrate seemed uncivic or superstitious. I had a mind to know if children born since the Revolution were brought up good Catholics: I singled out a boy about eleven, who was toppling beside the Diligence in hope of halfpence, and told him I would throw him a *sou* if he said his *Pater noster*; he repeated it perfectly: I tried the like experiment on a girl about the *Credo*, and again some stages further: everywhere the children were as perfect, or more so, in what good Catholics learn, as of yore. Montreuil, the pleasantly situate, is sadly changed; five churches in ruins are mouldering

into rubbish. An elderly Parisian in the coach praised their picturesque appearance with atheistic glee. Gentry of narrow income used to bedwell Montreuil; they are gone, war, want or death knows where. The chateau of Breteuil is lessened to a single pavilion; that of Chantilly is wholly demolished, but neat farms and garden-walls have grown out of its materials. The beautiful view over the vale of Montmorenci still presents an extensive prospect of rich cultivation, yet the hedgeless sweeps of field are more motley than they were; everything looks like dole-land; a patch of sain-foin crimsons here—a patch of rye greens there—the earth wears a harlequin jacket: this announces a multiplication of proprietors. There is no waste land to be seen, but much cultivation with the spade. The breed of sheep resembles the Southdown; rams are brought from the Roussillon and from Spain in order to mend this breed. Stock and manure seem scarce. The wages of rustic labour have risen about one-fourth. The burden of parish road-duty is abolished, and a turnpike of about twopence a horse every two leagues is substituted. The roads are in excellent condition: the broad pavements in the centre are not left off; the tall elms on each side are not cut down: old trees are remarkably few. The manners of the city have not at all extended to the pea-

santry: the same broad-brimmed hats, the same blue jackets and breeches cover the men; the women have the same close mobs, red boddices and blue petticoats; the children the same wooden shoes. Short of Paris, nothing surprised me so much as the imperceptibility of change. I had been away twelve years.

"When you arrive at Paris, climb the turrets of Notre Dame. Man! what a panorama! I never could understand the merit of a mountain prospect: the eye walks on broken flints*; the paths are too steep to ascend or descend; the rills too fally to float a canoe; the hills too rugged for the plough; where there might be pasture, glares a lake; cottages can be staked there, not a city. Look here—I like these masses of stone which mind has moved, which the arranging hand of man has piled into dwellings, arched into temples, laid out into streets or expanded into public edifices, where centre the roads of a thousand miles, the produce of millions of acres, the picked intellect of a hundred departments, the best works of human art in literature, picture, architecture, sculpture,—the brain of France, the wonder of Europe, the result of ages, the glory of society. What London is to the earth, Paris is to Europe. Such are

* Many of these sentiments are repeated in the letter to Robert Southey, November 30th.

the ideas which crowd on the soul at the view of great cities; and the grand events of which they have been the nest and the seat, and the imperial authority which they exercise over distant men and distant ages, both as to opinions and laws and institutions,—all these thoughts become associated with the walls and gates and bridges, with the columns and roofs, with the pinnacles and spires, which cluster in grey profusion about and underneath. Observe that fine green and planted promontory, which guides as it were into Paris the clear, swift, cerulean waters of the Seine,—those islands, containing the Palace of Justice and other useful and conspicuous buildings,—that grove of lime-trees, which embosoms the Botanic Garden,—that high-stationed and high-statured dome of the Pantheon, once the temple of hero-worship, but from whose infernal crypts the sainted remains of Murat and Pelletier, and other foes to kings are now all excluded, except of Rousseau, which Taste will one day restore to Ermenonville, and of Voltaire, which Piety will also remove,—the Luxembourg, with its shady gardens, a majestic, heavy palace, intended for the Conservative Senate,—the dome of the Val de Grace, now a barrack, which directs the eye to the Observatory, whence Lalande shows unseen suns to Europe,—those twin towers of St. Sulpice,—the

noble dome of the Invalides, and the military school beyond.

"The Seine divides Paris into equal parts; it runs out of the town below the Invalides. On the opposite bank the Tuileries arrest the attention. It is a walk after my own heart; '*Tout bosquet est un temple, tout marbre un Dieu*:' from its terraces those unrivalled monuments of building, the Garde-meuble and the Louvre,—the dry ground, no wet grass to walk on, — tall, shadowy chestnut-trees overhead, ranked in endless colonnade,—the air cooled by the busy evaporation of aspiring *jets d'eau*,—throngs of decorated beauty, and forms of marble which leave even these behind. Hence, mimic wildernesses! what have you of comparable to offer? The eye travels with slow delight along the Quay of the Louvre, from bridge to bridge, and oscillates at the opening before the Pont Neuf, from the Mint to the Old Louvre, buildings admired for their architecture, and well displayed by their emplacement. Behind, an immeasurable flat expanse of thickset houses, stretching to the windmill-covered hill of Montmartre, and eastward to those woodstacks, which conceal the ruins of the Bastille. The aisle of St. Eustace, the beautiful gothic steeple of St. Jaques, the melon-like covering of the Corn-hall, the fine-coned turret of the Temple, distinctly out-climb

the level of roofs which chrystallize around. He who wished to inspire the love of this world, did well to lead the young rabbee round the pinnacle of the temple; here he has given it to Bonaparte. Paris is greatly embellished; a new quay, four begun bridges, as many new market-places, two or three streets, and those mile-long lumber-rooms of plunder, which contain the spoils of the palaces and churches of Italy and Flanders, are added since my former visit. I have enjoyed myself wonderfully: I am exactly made to delight in that class of beautiful objects which derives effect from associated ideas of human skill.

"Yours,

"WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

"My dear Martin, "Norwich, July 26, 1802.

"Paris *news* you want. In fact, I ought to have recollected that the panorama which I commanded from the window of my apartment there, although one of the finest in the world, is a *lasting* beauty, and not one of those which *I* happened to see and not another,—which this spring called into the blossom of notice and not other years. Yet the two or three individual gazes of a traveller constitute his whole value: what every-one must view is in print, in copper-plate, in painting or in fello-plastic (you have seen the

cork-model of Rome, with every ruin carved and colored to the archetype, which was shown about some years ago), and thus become familiar already; it is needless to re-describe the thrice-vaunted and be editor to a fourth edition. What sights did *I* see? The illumination which succeeded to the news of the Definitive Treaty: the Parisians fill a sort of bottle-sliders (or at least cylindrical wooden trays of that size and form) with grease, and stick in each a stout wick; these stands, which burn about three hours with the huge blaze of a flambeau, are ranged on the outside of their windows, from three to six at a window, in one or two tiers. The private houses look more flaring, but less cheerful, than those of London with internal candle-lights at the sashes: but their public edifices outshine the expectation of one who has just read in Wieland's Tale the description of the fiery dwelling of the Salamandrine. Every architrave and window-sill of the long and regular palace of the Tuileries was thickly dotted with these arches, —every frontoon and arch regularly framed with them,—the pyramidal roofs of the pavilions glittering to the very apex,—in every niche and arcade a depending globular screw of lights,—so as to form a building of tongues of fire,—and these wavering in the wind as if the earthly solidity of that huge edifice was no more, but in

its place stood a luminous spectre of flame, imitating its form and shining with the sunny glory of resurrection.

"The French write in huge letters on those buildings confiscated to the profit of the nation, LIBERTE, EGALITE, and other such words. It is curious that on the pavilion where Bonaparte resides should occur the word *Equality*, and where his guards and soldiers sleep the word *Liberty*. He governs wisely, I believe; but people are so much afraid to comment on his government, that Paris is quite another Venice. The allegiance of the army is very equivocal: a lieutenant was arrested while I was there for undertaking to shoot Bonaparte on the parade, and a general for undertaking to raise the troops in case of the assassination. A whole regiment was ordered to San Domingo for refusing to accept *consecrated* colors at the hands of the Chief Consul. The army is very antichristian: sacrilegious songs are sung at camp, the *Guerre des Dieux anciens et modernes* is read there, and the late restoration of the old religion is unwelcome to the military. That was again an important moment during my stay, to see, not the resurrection of Christ merely, but of Christianity itself, celebrated in the very temple where the goddess of Reason had occupied the altar of the cast-out Mary, and profaned the carpetings of holy tapes-

try for which Le Brun and Le Sueur had taken the designs from the Acts of the Apostles and the biographies of Jesus. The procession was not in good taste: military music, soldiers on foot, hack-coaches full of common-council-men, military music, soldiers again and again, coaches full of legislators, military music, soldiers on horseback, some Catholic ambassadors, Bonaparte and his wife, and other carriages of *the family* and of the consuls, and again military music and soldiery: soldiers lined the bridges and the quays, and you would have taken the whole show for people setting off for a review. I wanted to have seen the goddess of Reason tearing her robe of sackcloth and powdering her tresses with ashes, and carrying a penitential taper before a moving train of Magdalenes; and fathers of families leading their grown-up children to the altar to receive, now for the first time, both at once the long-intermitted sacraments of baptism and confirmation, while hoary bishops were calling down with folded hands and wet eyes the forgiveness and benediction of heaven, and young acolytes were sweetening with incense the warm over-breathings of thronging devotion: but neither the people, nor the priests, nor the soldiers, seemed to be up or down to the occasion. Religion, however, is become the order of the day: the Jew lumberers exhibit at

their windows the ell-high candlesticks, purchased of the church-robbers, with the pixes; pious women buy these candlesticks and present them again to the church: crucifixes sell, and crosslets glitter on the necks of the ladies. The *Esprit de Gerson* and other books of casuistry undergo new editions; the book-stalls are covered with what we should call tabernacle-classics: Chateaubriand's *Génie du Christianisme* is become the *ton* book: to write on religion is the task of hack book-makers; the very farce-writers of the Boulevards turn their quills to *Entretiens de l'âme fidelle avec Dieu.* Popery is returning with all its trumpery; indulgences are posted up in the churches, and the paltriest twopenny-halfpenny woodcuts of Christ or the Virgin are wafered against the walls as the pious gift of the Widow So-and-so to this church (I am describing what I saw at Montmartre for instance): even convents are re-occupied, as at Bruges that of English nuns. Protestantism seems to be becoming a genteeler religion than the Catholic, and evidently feels strengthened by the *Concordat*; at Arles and at Caen two large congregations have originated almost spontaneously. The *philosophes* are all tongue-tied; under the name of professors, conservators, lecturers, &c., every writer and writerling of name has a salary from the government and instructs the people.

It is a Chinese constitution: merit, talent, are sought and lifted, but it is from within by the higher mandarins, not from without by the people: in both countries the atheistic sect occupies the mandarinate.

"Yours,

"William Taylor, Jun."

The lion-hunting occupations of a traveller allow him but a brief leisure for writing, and dispose him but little to improve it, unless indeed it be his object to collect materials for a tour, a diary, or a narrative; it is not therefore surprising that, with the exception of these letters, William Taylor has left no memorials of this excursion in France. The same cause suspended for a time his general literary pursuits; but on his return he immediately renewed his contributions to the Monthly Magazine*, and

* The following are the papers which he furnished during the year 1802:—

Vol. XIII.

1. Comments on Mason's Supplement to Johnson. (Two papers.)
2. On the meaning of the word Dado.
3. Portfolio of a Man of Letters.

Vol. XIV.

1. Translation of a Sonnet of Abbate Monti.
2. Comments on Mason's Supplement to Johnson. (Two papers.)
3. A variety of articles in the Portfolio; among them those

from this time he engaged more actively and extensively in other publications. A plan having been formed for establishing in Norwich a new weekly newspaper, his reputation as a man of letters, and his known inclination to that line of politics which this paper was intended to assist, induced the projectors to make him an offer of the editorship. In entertaining this offer he had no view to his own private advantage, but he considered it as affording an opportunity of serving some one of his friends. He proposed it to Robert Southey, whom he hoped thus to allure to a permanent domicile near him, and to the Rev. Stephen Weaver Browne, then resident at Paris; and it was not till after he had experienced a refusal in both these quarters, that, finding he could not recede without injury to the proprietors and disappointment to the public, he undertook the office, still however looking to it as a future provision for some other party. It was also towards the close of the year 1802, that he took a part in the preparations then making for bringing out the first volume of the

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on Dr. Geddes, Water-proof Clothing, An Inscription in Egypt, Taylor the Water-poet, Hobbes, Jeremy Taylor, Manasseh, &c.

4. A Treatise, under the head of the Enquirer (p. 486), on Berkeley's Theory of Idealism. This is the Essay to which reference is made in the letter to Robert Southey of the 6th of February, 1803.

Annual Review. Many particulars relating to both these engagements will be found in his correspondence; they supersede the necessity of ampler details here. As a preliminary step to the fulfilment of the first of them, he issued the following prospectus, which is perhaps the most singular and original document that ever appeared on such an occasion:—

"*Proposal for undertaking a Norwich and Norfolk Weekly Newspaper, to be called*

THE IRIS.

"During the late Elections, both the Norwich Papers, with a consentaneity formerly unusual, joined their influence to thwart the success of the County and City Candidates supported by the Whig Party. This coalition, however inefficient, was vexatious; and many supporters of the present members in consequence expressed a wish, that some Newspaper were undertaken in which the sentiments of their friends would find not only admittance but welcome. If that wish still subsists at all extensively, we will begin the publication of another Weekly Norwich and Norfolk Newspaper, entitled 'The Iris.'

"Iris, according to the allegories of ancient mythology, sprung from Curiosity, or Thaumas, and was the messenger of Juno, the goddess of

empires: on swift wings she brought and bore every variety of intelligence in pleasing words. Her errands were motley and conspicuous as the colors of her rainbow: she sometimes instructed the slumbering monarch, sometimes brought perfume to the toilet of her protectress, and sometimes indicated for the deceased the path to Hades. Her robes were blue and white; the rival of Mercury, the teaser of Chronos, she is every way fitted for our patroness*.

"Not with the title alone, with the contents of our sheet we wish its purchasers to be satisfied. Like other papers, it must allot to the insertion of advertisements all the space which a welcome patronage may enable us to overspread with intelligence so authentic and so profitable. Like other papers, it will include an epitome of the parliamentary debates: the speeches of orators, to whom Europe listens with interest, will suffer but little compression; those of our local representatives shall be given with partial amplitude; harangues which supply the morning-papers of London with many inches of text must often dwindle here into a line; but an endeavour will always be made to include whatever is remarkable for stimulant singularity, rhetorical beauty, or soundness of argument. Like other papers,

* An explanation of these allusions will be found in a letter to Robert Southey, January 17, 1803.

every number of the Iris will contain a catalogue of the great and little intervening events; continental news and domestic incidents, the rise and fall of corn and stocks, trials, festivals, accidents, exhibitions, births of the rich, marriages of the fashionable, burials of the eminent, will be transcribed with faithful alertness; nor shall the good things of either side—the short, sharp, neatly pointed witticisms, the prose epigrams of party, the gnats preserved in amber, be willingly left out. If these topics be insufficient habitually to supply what compositors call the requisite *stuffing* (and during the recess of parliament they are not likely to suffice), recourse is to be had to reviews, magazines and journals of celebrity for amusive anecdotes, acute speculations, or useful instruction: there is a knack even in plundering, and this knack we hope to acquire in the progress of our literary selections. Poetry too is cheap stuffing; during a lack of materials we shall willingly mingle in our inkstand the waters of Helicon. What then will distinguish the 'Iris' from other similar publications? But little:—the wish, rather than the power, to inculcate anew those principles of liberty which, before the intrusion of an intolerant sect into the leading literature and active politics of Britain, had lifted this nation to an eminence and felicity now, alas! of doubtful return;

and the disposition, rather than the hope, to infuse that philanthropic spirit of peace, which, unless held very dear by the people themselves, and fostered with expressive attachment, will soon be driven away by the turbulence of unmerciful factions, leaving the wide earth once more a prey to the ruin and havoc of a hopeless war."

This address excited much criticism, curiosity and expectation, and all circumstances augured favourably for the success of the undertaking. In the meantime the correspondence with Robert Southey, which had been for some months interrupted, was re-commenced by the following letter:—

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 25.)

"Kingsdown, Bristol, Nov. 21, 1802.

"You asked me the English phrase for *Le beau Ténébreux* (a good bold beginning, instead of a confession and supplication for forgiveness of sins): 'The Fair Forlorn' is the new word in the English Amadis; but I, who with all proper anonymousness am printing an abridged 'Amadis' from the Spanish, use the original name, Beltenebros, with a 'being interpreted' where it first occurs.

"Now then for egotism. You know, or ought

to know, that I am no longer secretary to the Irish Chancellor, losing a foolish office and a good salary. The salary I might have kept, if I would have accepted a more troublesome situation, that of tutor to his son: all this was transacted with ministerial secrecy and hints, but with respectful civility: so much for that. Moreover, you know that I have an additional reason for ceasing to be a wanderer upon the face of the earth, having now a nursery as well as a library to remove. I am in treaty for a house in Glamorganshire, eight miles from Neath, in the Vale of Neath, between high mountains,—a beautiful spot, almost the most beautiful that I have seen in this island: the treaty will in all probability end to my wishes, and in the spring I shall probably be R. S. of Maes Gwyn. To live in the country is my choice; and for climate and economy, and advantage of situation as to carriage and supplies, I could not be better situated. There I mean to remain and work steadily at my history, till it be necessary for me to go to Portugal to correct what I shall have done and hunt out new materials: this will be two years hence; and if the place answer my wishes I shall not forsake it then, but return there as to a permanent residence. One of the motives for fixing there is the facility afforded of acquiring the Welsh language.

"Since we parted in London I have done nothing but read Spanish and Portuguese history and compile from it. I did expect to have had the first volume in a fair and readable form by Christmas, but sickness and sore eyes have thrown me back: for the last three weeks the least reading and writing in which I have indulged has been an imprudence. Sickness I have got rid of, but my eyes continue miserably weak; the lower lids are inflamed, and I am obliged usually to pass my evenings in darkness: this is a heavy loss of time.

"George Burnett has thought proper to drop all intercourse with me in a very strange way. When we were in town together I saw him almost daily, and we were as confidentially familiar as ever, notwithstanding the good advice which I was always free enough and friendly enough to volunteer*: he passed through Bristol in June, and supped with me on his way; on his return last month he did not call: my friend Danvers met him, and asked if he had seen me. —'No.'—Why did he not call?—George answered, that Southey was not the sort of society

* It may be thought that there would have been more propriety in withholding than in promulgating this and some other communications of a similar nature. The only reason for introducing them is, that it would otherwise be impossible to understand William Taylor's comments upon them, which develop traits of character too honourable to be suppressed.

he liked, &c., and went on, in his usual foolish style, to talk about a pistol if everything else failed him. Poor fellow! he is too vain to know that the feeling which has been rankling in him is envy, and it is now ripening into hatred. He is now in London, waiting for a situation in character, and George Dyer, in character also, looking out for one for him. A tutorship here, and that a very desirable one, was offered him, but he refused it as beneath him. I am vexed and provoked whenever I think of his unhappy folly: that a man should be at once so very proud and so utterly helpless,—so proud of what he will be, and so ignorant of what he is. As to his quarrel with me, I shall not notice it; but whenever we meet accost him as usual, and think that the fit is past.

"As to poetry, I have long abstained therefrom: old chronicles please me better; and in the midst of all my industry there is a principle of idleness at the bottom: to read and to compile are occupations of no effort; they are works of amusement, and never make the face burn or the brain throb. Sometimes I think what I will do, and build up a huge faery castle in the air; but when it comes to brick and mortar, alas for the stately rhyme! You saw in London one book of the 'Curse of Kehama': I have corrected that and added half a book more, and

this is every verse that I have written, except now and then an ejaculation of some thought concerning Beelzebub, which I shall perhaps one day collect under the title of 'Horæ Diabolicæ.' Meantime, however, my other labours here amount to a respectable quantity. The 'Amadis' is about half done; it will make three thick little volumes. If you know the original book, you know it is a very fine work: I only dislike it because it is a business of necessity that takes time from more important occupations. Yesterday I had a very valuable arrival from Portugal, —an unpublished chronicle by Fernam Lopez, their oldest chronicler: the MS. itself about from 250 to 300 years old; the writing good, but not easy enough for my eyes at present to decypher.

"Henry asked me in his last letter who it was to whom you promised, when in London, to give some scarce book. His address is, Richard Heber, Esq., to the care of Messrs. Leigh and Sotheby, Booksellers, York Street, Covent Garden.

"Now forgive me for a long silence. In truth this letter ought to go for half a dozen, by the effort of eyesight it has cost me.

"God bless you! Yours very truly,

"Robert Southey."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 27.)

"Norwich, November 30, 1802.

"Thanks, my dear friend, for your letter of the 21st November. I ought to have written you from Paris, but found in the restlessness of curiosity a perpetuality of occupation which apologized to myself for the omission. When I came home I had too much to say to dare to undertake it; then came two elections—for the city, for the county—and the scrutiny, which busied time and idea to the detriment of all those orderly applications, during which I willingly slide from formal composition to epistolary intercourse. You too were in a migratory state, and I could hear just that from Henry about which it might seem impertinent to be inquisitive, and unfriendly to be indifferent. I still wish that you had relinquished not only the idea of settling at Richmond but of settling in Wales, and that you had tried our cheap house-rent and our pleasant neighbourhood. We are about to establish a new party-paper, in opposition to the antijacobin Mercury and Chronicle printed weekly here. You might have received a hundred a year (and may still) as the editor of that paper: Henry and I would have done, if not all, at least much of your work, and we should have plagued the antijacobins in very amusive con-

cert. Thursday night and Friday morning would have been the only times of much fagging; the printer, Mr. Kitton, can do all the ordinary toil. The Portuguese history, the 'Horæ Diabolicæ,' the modernized 'Amadis,' might have gone on as now. Alas, for 'Madoc'! you would not indeed have provided the future chevaliers with glens in Gwyneth to perambulate and to map. Whether Burnett envies you or not, I envy you: with philosophy enough to despise all wealth, and beneficence enough to deserve all wealth,—with talent that can, and application that will, get fame,—with a wife,—with a child,—how should Burnett not think you an object of envy? I hope neither he nor I should wish to withdraw the smallest atom of a happiness which we have not the spirit to emulate; and I cannot believe that either he or I could view it without complacence, or without the entire wish, were it in our power, to increase it. Glamorganshire, the Vale of Neath, Maes Gwyn,—what places to render classical! How can you delight in mountain scenery? The eye walks on broken flints; not a hill tolerant of the plough, not a stream that will float a canoe; in the roads every ascent is the toil of Sisyphus, every descent the punishment of Vulcan: barrenness with her lichens cowers on the mountain-top, yawning among mists that irrigate in vain; the cottage of a

man, like the eyrie of an eagle, is the home of a savage subsisting by rapacity in stink and intemperance: the village is but a coalition of pig-styes; where there might be pasture, glares a lake; the very cataract falls in vain,—there are not customers enough for a water-mill. Give me the spot where victories have been won over the inutilities of nature by the efforts of human art,—where mind has moved the massy, everlasting rock, and arrayed it into convenient dwellings and stately palaces, into theatres and cathedrals, and quays and docks and warehouses, wherein the primæval troglodyte has learned to convoke the productions of the antipodes.

"I wanted to translate a passage of Wieland, in which he calls a fine writer of the antijacobin sort, who had been defending the expediency of ignorance among the multitude, 'the beautiful darkling.' *Le beau ténébreux* would do in French, but *the fair forlorn* would not do in English. I wish you would blot out your Beltenebros and take 'the beautiful darkling.' It may one day suit to call Burke so.

"For your sore eyes I wish Henry could send you an efficient collyrium. Ought eyes so employed to go sore? However there is this consolation,—you must intermit oftener the labour of compilation, which is eye-wearying, and enjoy oftener the pleasure of internal rhapsody; you

must in some degree forgo history for poetry. By-the-bye, does the edition of Chatterton go on? Of the names collected here a long while ago I can only recollect T. S. Norgate, Esq., of Hethersett, Thomas Dyson, Esq., of Diss, James Alderson, M.D., of Norwich, and myself: there were more names, but the bookseller who hung up the proposal has long since quitted his shop, and has no trace left of the whole transaction. Dr. Aikin is editing the poems of one Moore of Liskeard, a defunct dissenting minister: do you know if they be good for anything?

"Are you to take any part in the new Review, or annual Register of literature, which Arthur Aikin is to manage for Longman and Rees? it almost seems of your projecting, from what you wrote me last winter. He has sent me down some books, not very much to my taste,—but I will give it a year's trial,—Pinkerton's 'Geography,' and a heap of political trash about the East Indies and the West Indies, and the blacks, and sugar and cotton. That book of Pinkerton's I have just read through; it is the best system of geography extant: as for the rest I shall declaim about the topics indicated by the titles, as in the retrospect of last winter's Monthly Magazine, without heeding the inside.

"I thank you for the address of Richard Heber, Esq., and will send him at some early op-

portunity the 'Variety of Things, 1594,' with the necessary apology for the delay. Coleridge, or your Mr. May, sent me down the Morning Post containing his new 'Ode against the Invasion of Switzerland by France': the first and last stanzas are for my taste too disconnected and vague; but there is else a Miltonic swell of diction and eleutherism of sentiment which have an habitual claim to admiration.

"Dr. Sayers has just published a third edition, the notes extended and the 'Cyclops' of Euripides added.

"Yours,

"William Taylor, Jun."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 28.)

"Norwich, December 3, 1802.

"Dear Robert Southey,

"I have rather the wish than the hope, that you deign to waste a thought on settling here as editor of a Norfolk and Norwich weekly newspaper: the trouble, as soon as advertisements begin to pour in, will be trifling. I am now permitted to offer it to you by the printer: he rates the trouble at a guinea and half weekly; I am of opinion, that if you offer to undertake it at two guineas weekly, your proposal would be accepted. The place shall be kept open till I

have your answer: I shall myself conduct the paper willingly for three or four months, if it does not suit you to come hither before the spring. It is to be started the first Saturday in January, if the printing-office can get everything ready by that time, as is expected. The difficulty of finding a fit editor is considerable, and the printer very impatient for the result of an inquiry I undertook to make at Bristol, without however naming you to him: the sooner you can offer or prescribe a remedy for our distress the better.

"Yours,

"WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 26.)

"My dear Friend, "Bristol, December 6, 1802.

"I thank you for your offer and the wish which occasioned it, and if there were not some thousand and one objections, I should heartily like to be your neighbour. If I should not settle at Maes Gwyn, as is my hope and design, Hereford would probably become my home, because my uncle has a house there which is likely to become vacant, and he wishes to have me and all our joint books housed there till he comes over to join us: at any rate I would not remove to an unreachable distance from Herefordshire,

where my presence may very probably be necessary sometimes to look into his affairs. This is a sufficient reason. I might add that periodical employment would fetter me to one place; and though I respect the enjoyments of a vegetable or a zoophyte, I think nothing so wretched as a bird in a cage,—the will and the limbs for motion, and yet barred in!

"Longman has applied to me about his Review, and I shall write for it: they have sent me nothing yet. A little I shall do for the Critical,—a very little, and am going to be very civil to Mrs. Opie. You may remember I talked with you about *German* reviewing for the Critical: in consequence I spoke to Hamilton immediately after, and, mentioning no name, referred him to certain articles which I knew to be yours; last week only comes a letter requesting your name and address: you will of course hear from him.

"I hear an Edinburgh Review well spoken of; they have been at 'Thalaba' therein: pauper Thalaba is in the condition of Baxter's Christian, and wants a shove to make him sell. Farewell! I send you half a letter rather than delay an answer to an affair of business.

"Robert Southey."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 27.)

"Bristol, Tuesday, January 11, 1803.

"Last night, dear William Taylor, I commissioned an ambassador to pay some money to Burnett. By this day's post I learn that this was too late, and that the debt is transferred to you. Half the note goes in this letter, the other half as soon as this is acknowledged: but do not you give me a mere line of acknowledgement. Consider me as a lover of letter-reading, however deficient I may be in letter-writing from half a dozen causes.

"About Burnett I had written you half a letter, when a very absurd explanation took place, which rendered that half useless. He has thought proper to quarrel with me: he complains that I did not behave well to him in London, that my manners were always those of a superior, always expressing a familiar contempt, &c. &c. As for my own feelings upon the subject, you will guess what they must needs be: not anger, for old habits of affection are not so soon worn out. I am merely passive in the quarrel, ready to excuse it upon any plea of diseased head or diseased digestion that he may make. He is as completely driven mad by his studies as ever Quixote or Loyola was before him: a few worthless books of metaphysics are all he has ever read. All this will give you pain: I tell it you as the friend of both.

When you write to him, if you mention the subject at all, say of me that I am sorry he has done thus; that I utterly deny any intentional disrespect (God knows I never felt it), and that at any time I shall rejoice to take him by the hand. I am still unsettled: disappointed of Maes Gwyn, and looking out for some country dwelling within reach of Bristol. You are unhappily too far east; too far from all other friends, and from all chances of seeing them by the accidents of life; else—with enough common opinions and mutual regard to form a fit base for intimacy, and with enough dispathy always to keep conversation wakeful—you and I should be good neighbours, and, in the best and sacredest sense of the word, good friends. There is yet another bar to the possibility of this. I am but loosely attached to English ground, and will strike as few roots into it as I can. Here in the west the intercourse with Portugal is far easier. There I must go in about two years, and there if possible I would willingly fix my final abode, and spend my life speaking Portuguese and writing English.

"Weak eyes still annoy me and keep me idle. I can only write poetry, which is hard when prose pleases me better. 'Madoc' is on the anvil for the last time; probably I must publish it next winter. With an Odyssey fault of structure it will be a good poem: of that I feel most prophe-

tic assurance. I am correcting it with merciless vigilance,—shortening and shortening, distilling wine into alcohol. The Edinburgh Review is well done. Their principles of poetry thoroughly false, but ably pleaded. Their account of the story of 'Thalaba' very false; not so likely to be misrepresented wilfully as from negligence, for they misstate the events so grossly, that they cannot have read it with attention. I am well pleased to be abused with Coleridge and Wordsworth; it is the best omen that I shall be remembered with them; yet it is odd enough that my fellow-conspirator, Wordsworth, should be almost a stranger to me,—a man with whom I have scarcely had any intercourse, not even of common acquaintanceship. God bless you! In spite of Norfolk weather I am in good health; the spirits always stand at the same point.

"Yours,

"Robert Southey."

"My name has got into the papers as translator of 'Amadis;' I am endeavouring still to conceal the truth. John Southwell, Esq., will claim the book and explain the mistake."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 29.)

"Norwich, January 17th, 1803.

"Your letter of the 11th came to hand on

Friday. I had not until today leisure to acknowledge the receipt, which you forbid my doing in the off-hand concise form of a merchant's letter; you must forgo therefore the punctuality of a merchant's attention, and be content to doubt a day or two the more if your remittance came duly to hand.

"As to your squabble with Burnett, it is to me unintelligible, and seems to arise partly from a mimosa sensibility on both sides, which shrinks more at a touch than a storm, and partly from that over-frankness which communicates little displeasures before time has dimmed them into becoming feebleness of colouring. I sympathize a good deal with Henry's gratitude to Burnett for kindness shown at Yarmouth, and am not quite content that Henry's brother should be ceasing to participate the sympathy. Much allowance is due to Burnett's out-of-humourness, which his total want of an agreeable prospect in life, and the mortifying comparison of the *is* with the *might have been* cannot fail, with all his boasted necessarian philosophy, to generate.

"This sheet is accompanied by the proposal for undertaking the 'Iris,' which, for want of you, I have had to draw up. It requires, to a distant reader, two annotations: that *blue and white* are the party colours, or ribbands, of Mr. Smith's friends at an election, and that the titles of the

extant Norwich papers are the Mercury and Chronicle. The paper itself will probably be started on the 5th February, and will be of my superintending for the two years of the contract: my young friend, Edward Taylor, will abridge for me the parliamentary debates, and eventually undertake the whole, unless S. W. Browne, an ex-clergyman of this town, whom Henry and I saw at Paris, and whom you perhaps recollect at Yarmouth, should return and exonerate us. If you can send us a few gnats preserved in amber we shall thank you; but if you can send us advertisements of estates to be sold and houses to be let, of impending auctions and recent importations, of life and immortality to be purchased in drops and pills, or of the 'Amadis' of Britain, we shall hail you as a greater benefactor, as our magnus Apollo indeed. Dr. Sayers has given to Henry a copy of his new edition for you, of which I suppose you have been duly informed.

"What a strange prejudice you announce against the east! Do you still think of imitating the Carthaginian students whom St. Austin mentions in his 'Confessions,' and who were to have gone into the back settlements, beyond the blue mountains of Africa, to found a Christian platonical pantisocratical republic, and to become the Mango Capaks and Madocs of the paulo-post-future Tombuctoos? Is it to be so much nearer

the Ohio, that you prefer the Severn to the Waveney; and do you love the airs of the Atlantic because they revive in your recollection the Atlantis of your early idea? It would be an odd termination for you to select your home in the *patria* of the Inquisition, and to make choice of the despotism of Portugal for the form of your government. Yet to what does this westering tend? To write about a country no doubt endears it.

> 'Here shine the valiant Nuñes deeds unfeign'd,
> Whose single arm the falling state sustain'd;
> Here fearless Ega's wars, and, Frias, thine,
> To give full ardour to the song combine,'

says the translator of 'Camoens;' but who else cares or knows anything about the worthies of Portugal but such peculiar students? Your history may indeed serve to popularize them, and it is right to prepare the funeral oration of a nation so likely to be soon entombed.

"The story of 'Thalaba' may have been mistaken by the Edinburgh reviewer, but it is not very clear to anybody. A great deal is told by implication, and too lyrically: there is also a great deal too much of the and, and, and, of Scripture and ballad style. The use of the lyrical form of narration is to omit that which is naturally insipid: of course particles, and whatever ekes out the expression, are peculiarly un-

natural in it. To my ear it does not matter whether lines are short or long; but it pains me when the alternation of short and long syllables is interrupted in the iambic, and when the emphasis is misplaced in the anapæstic measures. Dr. Sayers divides into sweeps of unequal lengths his blank verse, but he studiously manufactures each sweep of the most regular feet, so that you may count off a whole page, where every other syllable is long, every other short, where his iambics are as uniform and mellifluous as Dryden's.

"I am teazed with the toothache, but I shall not call in Henry's pelican. Oberon, Oberon!

"Yours,

"WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 28.)

"Bristol, January 23rd, 1803.

"Henry's brother does not cease to sympathise with Henry's gratitude to Burnett. Burnett has quarrelled with me, not I with him; and one motive of my writing about it to you was, that he might understand no angry feeling existed in me, and that, whenever he recovers his common sense, he may know that I have never lost mine. Mimosa sensibility is not among the seeds that have thriven in me; there has not been hot-house nurture enough for such weeds, such parlour-window exotics.

"Your prospectus has the mark of the beast. I should have known it to be yours had it been for a York or an Exeter paper; and excellently good it is. Success to you! I wish I had advertisements to send you, or anything else. I am reviewing for Longman,—reviewing for Hamilton, —translating; perhaps about again to versify for the Morning Post,—drudge, drudge, drudge. Do you know Quarles's emblem of the soul that tries to fly, but is chained by the leg to earth? For myself I could do easily, but not easily for others; and there are more claims than one upon me. But in spite of your prospectus, and all the possible advantages of a party newspaper in a county where parties are nearly equal, I cannot be satisfied that William Taylor should be a newspaper editor; that he, who should be employed in preparing dishes for the daintiest palates, should be making wash for the swine. Few men have his talents, fewer still his learning, and perhaps no other his leisure joined to these advantages. From him an *opus magnum* might—ought to be expected. Coleridge and I must drudge for newspapers from necessity, but it should not be your choice. I remember Edward Taylor as a fine open-faced boy,—Stephen Weaver Browne as one who had always a good-humoured laugh on demand. Pray send me your 'Iris': I care so little about news, that to have it regularly once a week will be adding to my stock of know-

ledge. Besides, I would have your amber-shrined gnats in my cabinet.

"'Thalaba' shall be severely corrected. Yet am I a dull dog if the story be obscure, and can only say with Coleridge, 'intelligibilia, non intellectum affero,' which, I pray you, quote for me to those who do not understand it. Metrical faults I confess in all abundance; but my 'ands,' my μενς and δες, have their uses; they soften the abruptness of lyrical transition, and connect the parts. The garden of Iram history has been long condemned; so has all in Book IX. after the chain of Thalaba is loosed.

"I will endeavour to find leisure from so many employments to send you 'Madoc' book by book as it proceeds, that you may find faults in time. It is now fourteen years since I fixed upon the subject. In 1792 I began to collect materials, in 1794 began the poem, recommenced it 1797, finished it 1799, and am now pulling it down and building a better edifice on the same ground. I am ambitious of your praise, and of that of men like you who judge feelingly and knowingly, and of the praise of those who judge feelingly without knowledge. But for the *tiers état*, the middle class who want feeling and only pretend to knowledge,—it would not be easy to express the indifference with which their praise or their censure affects me.

"Your letter gave me the first intimation of

Dr. Sayers's book: thank him for me. It is now just ten years since I bought the 'Dramatic Sketches,' the first book I was ever master of money enough to order at a country bookseller's. The Runic mythology will come under my hands in its turn: of the Celtic, there is not enough recoverable to afford materials. Perhaps Dr. Sayers has not chosen his subjects well: the tale of 'Moina' would have done equally well for a Hindoo or a Peruvian drama.

"Farewell! We are still house-hunting: 'foxes have holes,' &c.—you know the text—but I cannot find a den. This vexes me: however, the rising or falling of my spirits is never very perceptible to others. I can keep the equal countenance and almost the equal mind. I expect Coleridge here this week on his way to France and Italy with Thomas Wedgewood, that is, if W. lives to go, or keeps his mind till March. God bless you!

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 30.)

"Norwich, February 6, 1802.

"My dear Friend,

"I am perfectly convinced at heart that you are right about Burnett, but being miff with him myself, I would not plead against him in the

least particular; he has a good heart, but an improvident indolence which will make him eventually burthensome to his intimates, unless he can be compelled to embrace some regular line of earning: a travelling preceptorship would suit him. You received, I hope, the two numbers of the Iris: the second was sadly hurried through the press and is very incorrect, but it was mended after the Friday post went away, and sold *here* in a less incorrect shape: the whole edition, which consisted nearly of a thousand copies of each sheet, was run off before twelve o'clock, and we are to consider tomorrow whether we will reprint them or not. Many people gave shillings for a copy in the afternoon to those who bought at sixpence in the morning of Saturday; but this spurt of curiosity announces not a steady sale. The passage in the Lord Grenville—'Those who saw one of the earlier embarcations,' to 'while their master occupies Madrid'—is eloquently written. Fox's speech is ingeniously helped out. The Sir Francis Burdett is poor stuff: it was to have ended at 'philosophy'; then the printer sent word he should want four inches to fill up the frame, and a paragraph was manufactured (to order) about the Union; still there were two inches deficient, and the lucky thought struck me of making a pother about his non-presentment to Bonaparte. Sir

Sidney Smith is one of the persons from whom the nation runs a risk of military ambition: he has evidently put the question to himself, *whether for an officer there be any other road to glory than duty?* and is already conscious of the danger of an affirmative answer. Are you not angry at my contempt for Egypt,—preferring a tenter-ground to Tentyra, and a market-place to a pyramid? But you recollect the similar sentiments in the 'Retrospect of Domestic Literature' last Christmas twelvemonth. The Burkisms against alarm are heavy; they want gaiety, levity, drollery; they are overloaded with allusions; there are materials for a trifle, but not whipped into froth: if we reprint, they shall expand and exclude the 'Rainbow.' I have got a little blue-book for the iridescencies of my imagination, and when a thought or metaphor bubbles up, which will do to blow out into a paragraph or a sentence, I put it down for fear of forgetting the Cynthia of the minute. You say you are versifying for the Morning Post: are you making those sonnets, signed W. L. D., which abuse Bonaparte and the anti-Swiss measures of the French in so sound a strain of sentiment? they are Miltonic in diction, but they have not all the condensation of Milton.

"I am reviewing for Longman as well as you; but I find myself tempted to steal from my ar-

ticles for Longman for the 'Iris.' The declamation about Louisiana was half of it drawn up for Pinkerton's Geography. What is my literary conscience to do,—to use the same periods in both capacities? that at least will be the determination of my indolence. I hate to re-compose, although I cannot transcribe without insertion. I never seem to myself to have said enough about anything, and could always prate, prate, prate at twice the length upon a topic. And yet my theory of good writing is, to condense everything into a nut-shell: I grow and clip with rival rage, and produce a sort of yew-hedge, tangled with luxuriance and sheared into spruceness. The desire of being neat precludes ease, of being strong precludes grace, of being armed at all points the being impervious at any. If it be more satisfactory to compress *à la* Bacon, it is more taking to expand *à la* Burke; and I manage to combine the harshness of the one with the profusion of the other, omitting of course of both the far-darting sagacity and omnipresent research. How long I shall have anything to do with the 'Iris' I know not; some help I feel pledged for during the two years which the subscription comprises. S. W. Browne wrote to me he should be here in April or May, and was disposed when he wrote to take it off my hands; but now his return

is put off till the year following. Whether Edward Taylor will care to have it I hardly know, and to any but a confidential editor I do not feel disposed to resign: it is to oblige the party here that I undertook it,—my interference is wholly disinterested; but I do not wish to see a paper which I shall get into large circulation pass into other than well-principled hands. I make some progress in getting into a train; and am persuaded that the quantity of labour necessary to conduct a weekly paper once afloat is smaller than the quantity which Longman's Review will boast of allowing fifty guineas for. I wish you would come here a house-hunting, we should make very good neighbours; and I do not perceive what it can signify that you should live so far off Hereford and no further, as you are never to have a prebendal stall there. But you know best, and act no doubt rightly, although to me inscrutably. Rickman, I hear, is gone to Paris in company with a Dr. Jones from your neighbourhood, or from Exeter; I should else have addressed to him a brace of Irisses,—a peacock for a turkey,—which is the appropriate Norfolk present at Christmas. You will or may have seen in the Magazine my 'Is Berkeley's defence of idealism satisfactory?' What do Coleridge and Wedgewood think of it? I hear they are going to publish conjointly some

metaphysics of the Berkeleyan sort, and am very curious to know in what manner they get over my radical argument as stated at the foot of the essay. The only good metaphysical book of our own times which I have met with is Thomas Cooper's Tracts: he reasons far more closely than Locke, against whose reputation, if he was not a Whig, I should be inclined to cast many stones: I perceive not on which of his writings one can hang an apology for those who have thought highly of him. There is no judging of 'Madoc' book by book: a part of the merit of parts is their proportion to the whole; the best of episodes may be a blemish because it outshines the main narrative. Farewell!

"WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 29.)

"My dear Friend, "Bristol, February 14, 1803.

"I was thinking over the 'Iris' and whether or no I was not bound in conscience to the effort of a letter upon the subject, when yours arrived and turned the scale,—the matter so pleased me, and the manner so offended me. There, the murder is out, and now I will say what for a long while I have thought,—that you have ruined your style by Germanisms, Latinisms and Greekisms, that you are sick of a surfeit of knowledge, that your learning breaks out like

scabs and blotches upon a beautiful face. I am led by indolence and by good-nature always rather to feel dislike than to express it; and if another finds the same faults that have displeased me in your writings, I have always defended them more zealously than if they had been my own: but faults they are,—faults anywhere, and tenfold aggravated in a newspaper. How are plain Norfolk farmers—and such will read the 'Iris'—to understand words which they never heard before, and which are so foreign as not to be even in Johnson's farrago of a dictionary? I have read Cowper's 'Odyssey' and 'Trissino,' to cure my poetry of its wheyishness; let me prescribe the 'Vulgar Errors' of Sir Thomas Browne to you for a like remedy. You taught me to write English by what you said of Bürger's language and by what I felt from your translations,—one of the eras in my intellectual history; would that I could now in my turn impress you with the same conviction! Crowd your ideas as you will, your images can never be too many; give them the stamp and autograph of William Taylor, but let us have them in English—plain, perspicuous English—such as mere English readers can understand. Ours is a noble language, a beautiful language. I can tolerate a Germanism for family sake; but he who uses a Latin or a French phrase where a

pure old English word does as well, ought to be hung, drawn and quartered for high treason against his mother-tongue.

"Had I been at Norwich, I would have besought you not to undertake an office so inadequate and so unsuited to your powers. You are incurring all the disadvantages of that public authorship which till now you had wisely avoided. Everybody knows that William Taylor edits the 'Iris'; even here I have heard it: but is William Taylor to learn that detraction is the resource and the consolation of inferiority? that every-one of his acquaintance who feel themselves inferior, will gladly flatter themselves by dwelling upon and magnifying every error or semblance of an error that he may commit? The world always expect more than they can find, and to this evil you are peculiarly subject, because you have hitherto kept yourself back. I doubt whether precipitancy be so dangerous as such withholding. What ought not to be expected from him who kept the 'Lenore' so many years unpublished? But you are in so far, that good-luck be with you! is the best thing I can now say.

"The metaphysical work talked of as the Orion progeny of Wedgewood, Mackintosh and Coleridge was only talked of; nor was Coleridge to have done anything more than preface the

work with a sketch of the history of metaphysics. He does project a work upon that subject, of which the first part,—if he ever have health and stability enough to produce anything,—will be the death-blow of Hobbes, Locke and Hume, for the two latter of whom in particular he feels the most righteous contempt. I am grieved that you never met Coleridge: all other men whom I have ever known are mere children to him, and yet all is palsied by a total want of moral strength. He will leave nothing behind him to justify the opinion of his friends to the world; yet many of his scattered poems are such, that a man of feeling will see that the author was capable of executing the greatest works.

"The sonnets you speak of are not mine: nothing of mine has yet appeared in the Post except the ballad of Bishop Athendius. You will always distinguish me by the subject, and by the omission of common faults, rather than the appearance of peculiar merit. In April I have some prospect of visiting London, for the purpose of getting at certain books in the Museum: if I get so far on the way, my conscience and inclination will lead me on to pass a week with you at Norwich. We are still houseless: indeed it is not an easy thing to find a house in the country without land, and near enough a town to be within convenient reach of its mar-

ket. We will yet go to Keswick if it be possible. I begin to hunger and thirst after Borrodale and Derwentwater. You undervalue lakes and mountains; they make me happier and wiser and better, and enable me to think and feel with a quicker and healthier intellect. Cities are as poisonous to genius and virtue in their best sense, as to the flower of the valley or the oak of the forest. Men of talent may and will be gregarious, men of genius will not; handicraft-men work together, but discoveries must be the work of individuals. Neither are men to be studied in cities, except indeed, as students walk the hospitals, you go to see all the modifications of disease. Rickman is not gone to Paris, nor going; he will be my host in London. Your paper upon Berkeley I shall look for. Burnett is still dreaming of what he will do; how he will show himself and outdo all the authors of the day, which he says is no difficult matter. Lord Stanhope, he says, will take care of him; I wish it may be so. God bless you!

"Yours affectionately,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 31.)

"Dear Friend, "Norwich, June 21, 1803.

"I thank you for your abuse,—the more of it the better; were it more specific it would be still

more instructive; for do you know, I am so accustomed to myself, as often to think that easy and natural in style which appears to another macaronic, affected, harsh and unclear? When the parliament ceases to sit I shall have room to make paragraphs again; at present we are obliged almost every week to throw out some that are set for the press, in order to make room for advertisements that arrive perhaps the last day: unless I get a paragraph into the inner frame, I am sure to be ousted of my declamation by some tailor or haberdasher, and the fashion of a topic seldom outlasts a week. You say something outsidely rude and insidely civil about its being my choice to edit; the fact is it was not my choice at all. At one time my friend S. W. Browne, who is a preceptor in France, was desirous of the office and begged me to get it done for him till he could come and take it: I pledged myself to the party who purchased the types that I would find up an editor, and when Browne disappointed me, I could only have Mrs. John Taylor's son Edward to divide with me what there is of drudgery. It is very little; it consists, when the London papers arrive, in including between brackets what is to be reprinted, —an operation which costs ten minutes if there be a debate to abridge, five minutes if there be only news to copy. The detail of Norwich in-

telligence is wholly managed by Mr. * * *, and if one wants to be absent, he can at any time do the whole: had he the modesty never to be original, I should much oftener trust him.

"I thought to have heard of your being in London, and to have written you there. Besides, I should then have written to your host Rickman as well as to you; for I have owen him a letter still longer. I have, however, nothing to tell either of you. I am busied now in theology, and have actually drawn up for the Monthly Magazine a paper, 'Who wrote the Wisdom of Solomon?' which has for its object to prove that Jesus Christ wrote it; partly from the internal evidence of passages descriptive of him, partly from the external evidence of the extreme veneration in which the book was held by all the apostolic characters. I have endeavoured to keep aloof from the question of miracles.

"A letter from Hamilton reached me a few days ago, to propose my becoming a co-operator in the Critical. I shall write him an answer as soon as I return from the sea-side. I was very busy for A. Aikin's new Review when the proposal came, and felt that one may have too much reviewing on the stocks. But this will probably suit me better than to have an annual harvest to thresh out for the Register. Could you never get them to insert in the Critical that reviewal

of ———, which Henry sent you for that purpose? Might it not be sent to A. Aikin to abridge for the Annual? Longman and Rees are in relation with the —— and would be glad to give them a lift. They print the husband's novels, interspersed with the wife's poems, and have just bought his translation of Soulavie's 'Castle of the Tuileries.'

"I have begun to modernize—no, to refashion—Drayton's battle of Azincour. I shall never finish it, because an ode, a disquisition, a ballad, a dialogue, is the *ne plus ultra* of my perseverance. But I shall some day fill you a whole 'Iris' with the first canto. The loyalty of it—nay worse, the church-and-kingism of the belligerent zeal in it, will divert you. The costume of time and circumstance allowed no other tone.

"Yours,

"William Taylor, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 30.)

"Bristol, 23rd June, 1803.

"Dear William Taylor,

"Your theology does nothing but mischief; it serves only to thin the miserable ranks of Unitarianism. The regular troops of infidelity do little harm; and their trumpeters, such as Voltaire and Paine, not much more. But it is such

pioneers as Middleton and you, and your German friends, that work underground and sap the very citadel. That Monthly Magazine is read by all the Dissenters,—I call it the Dissenters' Obituary,—and here are you eternally mining, mining, under the shallow faith of their half-learned, half-witted, half-paid, half-starved pastors. We must not give strong meats to weak stomachs. I have qualms of conscience about it myself. There is poor Burnett gone stark foolish, because he has been made the friend of the wise,—diseased at once with a plethora of vanity and an inanition of knowledge; with all the disposition to destroy himself, only that he cannot muster up courage, and that I suppose he will do at last, in the hope of being talked of as an instance of neglected genius. Oh, that proverb about the pearls and the swine has a great deal more in it than I once imagined! I, who am a believer, were I now at three-and-twenty, with the opinions that I hold at nine-and-twenty, would choose the church for my profession; but then I have a deep and silent and poet-feeling connected with these things, which has grown with me and will grow.

"It is you then who have delayed the Annual Review? My threshing was finished two months ago. I go to London on Sunday next, and will ask Hamilton for that account of ——, which

he has used me somewhat uncivilly in not inserting. His application to you twelve months after I had mentioned you to him, and almost six months after he applied to me for your direction, is very much in character. If he has not lost the article, I will turn it over to A. Aikin. It cannot want abridgement; he requested long articles from me, because he was short of matter.

"Why refashion 'Drayton'? In the first place, you could write a better poem than the old Michael; in the next place, instead of making the poets of Elizabeth's day talk as they do now, you would do better to make the poets under his most gracious majesty George III. talk as they did in Elizabeth's day. It is an article in my creed, that from the days of John Milton English poetry has gone on from bad to worse. We have had froth and flummery imposed upon us,—contortions of language that passed for poetry because they were not prose, and phrases that have been admired by faith, never being designed to be understood. Coleridge and I have often talked of making a great work upon English literature; but Coleridge only talks, and, poor fellow! he will not do that long, I fear; and then I shall begin in my turn to feel an old man,—to talk of the age of little men, and complain like Ossian. It provokes me when I hear

a set of puppies yelping at him; upon whom he, a great, good-natured mastiff, if he came up to them, would just lift up his leg and pass on. It vexes and grieves me to the heart, that when he is gone, as go he will, nobody will believe what a mind goes with him,—how infinitely and ten thousand-thousand-fold the mightiest of his generation.

"My stay in London will be short; I do not mean to be absent from home above a fortnight, and already wish that time was past. If transmigration be the true faith, and our aptitudes determine our destiny, if I be not exalted into my own old owl-eyed Simorgh, I shall certainly make my appearance in the next post-diluvian world in the shape of a toad in a stone. My little girl is so fond of me, that I am in a fair way of spoiling her, and, young as she is, I am sometimes showing her the pictures when I ought to be reading the book. However I get on. You will like my history, and you will like my 'Madoc'; and if you were to review them, why, I should be half an edition the richer man. My poor books make their own fortune, but not mine; they get me reputation, and I want money. Oh, if I could find some kind gentleman who has an ambition to be a poet and would pay me well for writing him up above all the Darwins, &c., of the day!

"Among the odd revolutions of the world you may reckon this, that my politics come nearer Mr. Windham's than they do William Taylor's.

"God bless you!

"R. S."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 32.)

"My dear Friend, "Norwich, July 3, 1803.

"Yours of the 23rd June I received. If you are disposed to come and see us, I shall have a bed at your service any time next week for as long as you please. I am going tomorrow for about a week to Lowestoff, to take a few dips in the sea. Your visit to Norwich at all times would be highly agreeable both to me and Henry. We are studying German together, and construe the 'Death of Abel' with facility. Perhaps your friend Rickman will be of the party. I ought long ago to have thanked him for the addition to the 'Population Abstract,' but have had nothing to tell him that I thought would appear interesting. I believe I shall soon set about an 'Essay on the Theory of Taxation,' and when that is written, I may perhaps send it to him for criticism. I should be ashamed to show him poetry or theology.

"I am very glad you are a believer. I think you will desert your low Arian for pure Socinian

ground, when you have read my paper about the 'Wisdom;' you will admit I must be right about the author. I expect the thanks of the Unitarian Society for winning them an irrefragable victory, and the revival of monastic institutions under the patronage of Mrs. Barbauld. Another letter is come from Hamilton. It is a settled thing that I am to try a few articles, and at the year's end we are to be regularly off or on, as we suit. Your 'Madoc' I should like to review for him; but as to your 'History,' I know nothing of Portuguese history; I am not up to criticising it properly.

"You make me curious about your politics. In what points do you agree with Mr. Windham? In anything beside his nationality, his spirit, his desire of seeing a courageous example of self-denying patriotism set by the higher classes of the people? The time is not come to be patriotic. The best thing ministers can do is, to patch up a peace through the mediation of Russia; and to this, torpor, sluggishness, indifference, apathy in the people tend to predispose them. When it is once clear that the third Punic war is come, energy must be put into power; whether that can be done without some popularization of the representation, may be questioned. I believe that we must take up all the jacobin opinions, keep our antijacobins, like

Bajazets, in cages to show them about, and point at as samples of the continental monsters we have to combat; and that we should so reverse the destiny of Carthage, and triumph with the usual fortune of liberty.

"Yours,

"WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 31.)

"My dear Friend, "Bristol, July 13, 1803.

"You will see by the date above that I have travelled westward from London. I had some thought of advancing to Norwich, but the plan which I am about to communicate has made me delay that till I am settled nearer. I have projected and negociated with Longman and Rees, and now actually undertaken the management of a 'Bibliotheca Britannica' upon a very extensive scale, to be arranged chronologically, and made a readable book by biography, criticism and connecting chapters; to be published like the Cyclopædia in parts, each volume 800 quarto pages. The full and absolute choice of all associates and the distribution of the whole to be mine.

"Now the first important point is to allot to every one that for which he is most fitted, and then to turn over the papers from one to another, to collect as much as can be had on the

subject. I am thus stocked with certain associates: for Saxon and Welsh, Sharon Turner, who has found out that he writes badly; for early voyages and all science thereunto appertaining, Captain Burney; for old surgery, Carlisle; for Roger Bacon, Rickman. At present I do not look beyond the subjects of the first volume. The schoolmen I hope Coleridge will take. There remain poets, romancers, lawyers, theologians and historians: the latter down to the Conquest fall under Turner's knowledge. Will you help me, and bring your stock of northern knowledge and of theology to bear upon the history of English literature? What I would ask from you is, to write upon the progress of the language, upon the history of our popular superstitions, upon the English history of religion: a little more covertly this last than you do for the Magazine, for you go beyond heterodoxy there. The first volume may perhaps come down to Mary or Elizabeth: think upon English literature down to that period, and tell me what you should like to write; for that you will help me I have little doubt. I would have you examine what I and what Turner write, and add thereto and annotate thereupon. You, who have seen a reviewer's account, know how lines are reckoned up into pages, and that the fragments being gathered up, nothing is lost.

"We think of getting a first part—that is, a half volume—ready by Christmas 1804. I go to reside near London for this express purpose. There can be no difficulty in getting out a volume yearly, and as little of the success of the book, if well managed. I shall remove to Richmond, where John May has already obtained for me the refusal of a house.

"The review of Mrs. ——'s poem perished in what Hamilton calls 'the late tremendous fire, which destroyed the whole of my extensive premises.' It would be too late for A. Aikin, for I was too late to notice a Greek poem upon Bonaparte; but you can send it again to the Critical.

"My politics are, that France calculated upon the weakness of our most miserable ministers, and was carrying on a system of insult and injury to which it would have been utter ruin to have submitted,—that Bonaparte is drunk with success,—that Malta was a bad ground for quarrel, the worst that could have been selected, because of least general or national concern, but that there was cause enough for war. My belief is that invasion will be attempted, but that 'the Christ of the Lord' (oh, curse his blasphemous soul!) will not adventure himself: my hope is that he may. The landing is a chance, and the chances are against it: if they land they will perhaps reach London, but not a man of them

will return to France, and we shall have such a monument as the Swiss reared to Charles of Burgundy. Our victory by land or sea turns the scale, and the northern powers, who have more reason to hate France than England, will then join us: then Holland will be free, and Switzerland and Italy made independent of France, and the peace of Europe established for a century to come. But first Bonaparte must go to the devil, and perhaps our national debt too; but I have not a fear for England,—the country was never so united, and therefore never so strong.

"Let me hear from you soon. God bless you!

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 32.)

"Bristol, August 24, 1803.

"My dear Friend,

"This will arrive in time to change the direction of the next 'Iris.' We hope to leave Bristol on Friday morning for Keswick. My poor child was buried yesterday, and we are quitting a place where everything reminds us of the loss. Poor Edith is almost heart-broken. The disease was hydrocephalus with teething. I have gone through more suffering than I ever before experienced, for I was fond of her even to foolish-

ness. Direct to me with Coleridge, Greeta Hall, Keswick.

"I have heard nothing from Harry for many months: I expected he would have acknowledged the receipt of 'Amadis.' God bless you!

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 33.)

"Norwich, August 27, 1803.

"My dear Friend,

"I am sorry for your loss; it is accompanied but with one consolation, that those who grow to maturity, notwithstanding water in the head, have their faculties very imperfect, their intellects paralytic.

"Henry is become a volunteer, and is learning to drill: I should have done the same; but as the offers of service here exceed all expectation, so that government will not accept anything like the number disposed for military employ, I thought it needless, either for example or utility, to undertake a trouble I dislike; I have therefore subscribed £25 to equip the more active part of the community, in commutation for individual attendance on the parade.

"Your 'Bibliotheca Britannica' will, I doubt not, answer your expectations and the bookseller's. If I understand the plan, it is to be a critical catalogue of every British publication,

arranged in the order of time, and distributed in the order of matter, if I may (for parallelism's sake) use this Gallicism. It will require the constant use of a very complete old English library, such as the British Museum. I have no black-letter books, and am little wandered in early reading, so that I do not foresee the probability of my being any way useful; but when I see the *modus operandi*, the nature of the task and the shape of the performance, perhaps I may join the gleaners now and then without conscious impertinence. My beat is Turner's—to whose 'History of the Anglo-Saxons' I could add many things. He has the fault of all our antiquaries, to equivalue the noble and the rabble of authorities: he should cultivate a more aristocratic taste, and not count the dunce and the genius by the head; he will else incur the reputation of pedantry and not of erudition. He has another fault,—that of being what Porson calls *behind-hand* with his subject; Schlötzer's 'Northern History' had settled forty years ago many points about which he is at a loss.

"Theology is a pleasant study to me, and we have no ecclesiastical historian of much value; it has been customary to make biographies of the priests, and to omit the literature which made the sects. But the older theology of the reformers is so gone by, and the controversies prior

to illuminism (if I may lump by that name the modern criticisms of the Scriptures) so uninstructive, that I should despair of the patience to didle* in their mud for pearl-muscles. I find no department that I ought to think of undertaking.

"You are more sanguine about the war than I am, thinking with Mr. Fox that it will not lead to a better peace than the last. The substance of my creed is, that, of all our party-leaders, he alone is fit to govern us, and that his monocracy would do all for us that can be done to improve our internal condition and acquire a continental popularity. I am not so violently offended as you at Bishop Cambaceres for calling Bonaparte 'the Christ of Providence.' He is not the *anointed* of *birth*, but of *event*; and religion considers every event as the disposition of Providence. He is not a more cruel desolator than Cyrus, to whom this denomination is by very high authorities applied; and his elevation has in like manner been conducive to the establishment and extension of the religion of the Bible.

"Yours,

"William Taylor, Jun."

"P.S. Until I was folding my letter for direction, it did not occur to me where you are: remem-

* A provincial term for *dredge*.

ber me to your friend Coleridge; we once interchanged a letter, and I took great pains to find him up in London the first time I went thither after,—he was just gone into Westmoreland: I inquired concerning him of Mrs. Clarkson, who was here a day or two ago. Has he read Kotzebue's 'Gustavus Vasa'? It is one of the best tragedies of the Germans. Schiller is most colossal, but Kotzebue most natural."

For some time after this, the removal of Henry Southey from Norwich to Edinburgh engrossed the correspondence of the two friends. William Taylor's warmth of affection and considerate kindness were never more strongly manifested than on this occasion: no father, preparing to fix a favourite son at the university, could have acted with a more provident care. These attentions endeared him in an equal degree to both the brothers; and although (as some of their more recent letters have shown) a sensible divergence of opinions was now taking place between him and the elder of them, it had not the effect of weakening their attachment or estranging their hearts. Generous minds know how to differ with forbearance: while the versatility of human passions and the wavering of popular movements are continually altering the state and condition of society, it is foolish to expect that

the opinions of individuals are to undergo no modification or change. Amid such fluctuations, principles fundamentally the same must often be carried out in opposite directions at different periods: there is more want of principle in an obstinate adherence to early conceptions, when time and circumstance demand the abandonment of them. The suspicion of sordid and corrupt motives may brand the turncoat with infamy, and the persecuting zeal of the renegade may well provoke a retaliatory indignation, but, except in these cases, the world's interference is an impertinent and unrighteous encroachment on the freedom of private judgement. The storms of the French Revolution had disturbed the old anchor-grounds of sects and parties,—they were set adrift to explore new channels and select new harbours; the constant enemies and the disappointed admirers of Bonaparte were actuated by a common reprobation of his undisguised tyranny, and it is not surprising that resistance to his ambition should have brought many, who had heretofore shown hostile signals, into friendly company under one convoy and on the same tack: it was a crisis to test the value and sincerity of professions.

William Taylor was by nature and by principle extremely tolerant towards the opinions of others, and an habitual respecter of the rights of con-

science; but he sought in an equal degree to arouse that unrestricted discussion by which alone truth can be ascertained and sound conviction produced: he could therefore allow his friends to differ from him without any diminution of kindly feeling on his part, while they appreciated too justly the goodness of his heart and of his intentions to quarrel with his paradoxes and theories, and love for the man heightened their estimate of his learning and talents. As in the case of Dr. Sayers, his friendship continued unabated with Robert Southey, who towards the close of the year again turned their correspondence to those literary subjects from which it had been diverted by private considerations.

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 33.)

"Keswick, December 11, 1803.

"My dear Friend, . .

"I have delayed writing to you far overlong, and somewhat ungratefully after all the trouble you have taken, the services you have rendered and the kindnesses you have bestowed upon Harry.

"I am fitting 'Madoc' for publication, and am disposed to try whether or not it be practicable to publish it on my own account by subscription, and thus have the whole profit myself, which the booksellers will else share: but I will

try this without publishing my intention at first, because a public failure would be unpleasant and perhaps lessen the marketable value of the ware, when I should be obliged to carry it to a chapman. If you can get me a few names I am sure you will: a quarto for a guinea,—the money on delivery of the book. I shall print it next winter; and then, having built my monument (if it were not for this history of mine), I should feel and think that my work was done.

"We are fixed here for some time,—indeed, I trust, till we fix decidedly; will you be our guest in the summer?* You will see Coleridge (who much desires to see you) and Wordsworth, and if Harry should not come here to meet you, and you should like to advance to Edinburgh, I will accompany you there: it is a long way truly, but the place deserves a second visit, and would reclaim you from some of your Netherlandish heresies.

"The 'Iris' is not only a very interesting paper, but is now the only interesting one. Your ballad of the 'Old Woman' has some excellent

* In a previous letter of the 23rd of October, which is among those omitted, an invitation to the same effect had been already given:—

"Can you not visit Keswick next summer? Coleridge will talk German with you; he is very desirous of knowing you; and he is a sufficient wonder of nature to repay the journey even if we had no lakes and mountains."

parts in it: the conception has far more power of fancy than mine; mine, indeed, is the mere narration of the true story. But your language wants ease and perspicuity; and there is a mixture of the ludicrous and the shocking, which, instead of amalgamating into the grotesque, has curdled,—each remaining separate and yet polluted: still it is a fine poem, and most evidently the work of an extraordinary man. I regret that the poor 'Anthology' is discontinued, for it would have given me great pleasure to have seen it in those types and on that paper.

"Coleridge is going into Devonshire to winter for his health. I know not when any of his works will appear, and tremble lest an untimely death should leave me the task of putting together the fragments of his materials; which in sober truth I do believe would be a more serious loss to the world of literature than it ever suffered from the wreck of ancient science. God bless you!

"Yours very affectionately,

"Robert Southey."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 34.)

"My dear Friend, "Norwich, January 5, 1804

"Many happy years to you and yours! I am very glad to learn through Dr. Reeve, who has

introduced Henry to his literary friends at Edinburgh, that your brother is just what he should be, attentive to letters and science and men of intellect, and a distinguished disputant in the Medical Society. I had no doubt of the removal being proper, and secretly rejoiced when matters took that turn, which left in fact no alternative. I have heard from Henry once or twice; but I like better to hear of him, because though he is frank he may not be impartial.

"Poor Burnett wrote to me the other day pressingly to entreat £40 to equip him with an uniform and a chest of drugs, having accepted a surgeoncy and an ensigncy in the militia. My father has just had misfortunes in London, which hardly allow us to retain our house; but my mother, being blind, must not, ought not to be removed. It gave me pain to cut off Burnett in an emergency with a paltry ten pounds; but when every person in a family is exacting privations of the other, it is brutal to be generous. Adversity does me one service—it makes me industrious. I expect to read today in the Critical my reviewal of 'Thalaba.' I do not know if Hamilton has the impertinence to curtail; I shall be angry if he has omitted the sally against the Edinburgh reviewers, among whom Henry will, I suspect, soon be initiated by his friend Jeffrey.

"Do you know, Burnett is to quit his regiment shortly, and to go to Poland with a nobleman who lives near Wilna, who hires him at eighty guineas a year as librarian and preceptor and secretary, and who can procure him a professor's chair at the university of Wilna, if, after the requisite stay in the family, he has learnt Slavonian enough to read lectures? Burnett is delighted, and undertakes to civilize the Huns.

"Whenever your proposals for printing 'Madoc' by subscription are made public, I will of course take what steps are to be taken here willingly. But I do not recommend your printing by subscription; it will bring on your works the reputation of not selling, and it will bring on a disposition in the booksellers to thwart your success, because they consider such lists as aimed at their profits. Why do you not write novels? it is a line in which you would excel. Except Mrs. D'Arblay, we have not a novellist; and it is so much more profitable than any other line of writing, that Mrs. Hunter here has been making of her three 'Letitias,' and 'Grubthorpe,' and 'Mrs. Palmerston,' almost five hundred pounds. It is enough to make a reviewer caustic out of envy.

"I have just been reviewing for A. Aikin the third volume of your friend Sharon Turner's Anglo-Saxons. Since I have known him to be your

friend I have liked his writing better. This third volume is certainly superior to the first, both for enquiry and judgement.

"Remember me to Mrs. Southey and to your host.

"Yours,

"William Taylor, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 34.)

"My dear Friend, "Keswick, January 7, 1804.

"I am desired by the Rev. Joseph Wilkinson, Ormathwaite, near Keswick, to order the 'Iris' for him. He is my neighbour at present, and a very excellent one I find him; but he will in the summer remove to Thetford, having lately got the living. I will desire May to pay up my subscription in London. You cannot conceive the comfort of seeing the rainbow once a week among these silent snows.

"Having discharged this commission, I may take out the knot in my pocket-handkerchief and blow my nose in comfort. I feel always a propensity to answer a letter as soon as it is received. A conversational loquacity then buds out, which it would be necessary to force when the season is past.—For what you say of family losses I am sorry, and should be still more, were they of such extent as to necessitate on your part the sacrifice of that leisure so well employed;

so well—though not in the best way possible, for I want from you a work of magnitude proportioned to your powers. The new situation which Burnett has obtained will end in simply ousting him from one which suits him better. You who must know his utter and almost unaccountable ignorance of books, must know also how utterly unfit he is for the office of librarian, particularly in a foreign country. His whole stock of bibliography is from Harwood's duodecimo upon the classics, or rather is to be, for my life upon it he will look to that as his guide, and not even suppose that any other can be wanted. Burnett has no love of literature for its own sake,—he only loves it for the distinction which it procures. Poor fellow! I was very anxious about him, and very hopeless. This militia situation was the best he could have; it gave him his quota of wine every day, and practised him in a trade by which he might eventually have lived comfortably, even if he did not obtain some permanent army appointment. He will now yawn over a Slavonic grammar with his usual dilatoriness, till the Polish nobleman finds himself unimproved and his books unarranged; and George will not have mastered the pronouns when the professorship will be offered him, as the civil way of breaking off the connection. Your review of 'Thalaba' will be of service to the book, which hangs sadly upon hand; half

only of the thousand were sold in July last,—that is, in two years. If I could live upon fame, or if it did not discourage my booksellers more than it does me, I should be very indifferent about this; but while they can employ me more to their own advantage in little underling works, of course they will do it, and I must let things alone more commensurate to my strength and more suitable to my inclination. *Non enim nobis, qui sub sole et pulvere indies laboramus, licet esse tam beatis, ut cæteris soluti curis, unico negotio opera atque animo incumbamus. Alio nos vocant quotidianæ vitæ curæ et sollicitudines, et frigidæ plerumque occupationes, quæ simul et avocant animum et comminuunt.* There is a lamentable truth in this complaint of poor Cave, whereof I have had lamentable experience. However, my job of annual slaughter is just brought to a conclusion, and I will have a fair run of three months before another thought of ways and means shall take off my morning attention from 'Portugal' and my evening from 'Madoc.' I have now only Malthus's book upon hand,—thus long delayed in expectation that Coleridge would put his Samson gripe upon that wretched Philistine.

"Your advice about 'Madoc' accords very much with my own opinion, which I had yielded to friendly importunity. What you say about a novel does not please me so well; my moral

stomach actually turns at the thought. In reviewing a 'History of the Methodists' I have been led into such a train of reasoning and speculating, and worked up into such a good, honest, hearty, cursing and swearing passion, that I have been half disposed to suppress the article and write a volume instead, and dedicate it under some *nom de guerre* to the Archbishop of Canterbury; and if A. Aikin should find me too pamphleteering for his great volume, this I shall assuredly do.

"You will, I am certain-sure, be well pleased with my history, whenever I shall have an opportunity of showing it you: there will be more industry put into it and more honest labour than have gone into any English book for the last century. I am almost as certain-sure that you will be equally satisfied with 'Madoc'; and if we should not meet before the publication is begun, I will rather copy it book by book for your fault-finding eye than let it want that most useful correction. But I hope we shall tempt you here in the summer: Skiddaw is an excellent bait. Something is doing about the poor, under the management of Poole, by Rickman's influence,—a man somewhat akin to Rickman in intellect, with far less learning, but perhaps with wider views,—the fittest man in the world for his colleague. I have a hope to see Rickman one day

in some active situation. This perpetual succession of wretched ministers makes me ashamed of my country. Is not Milton's word 'duncery' a fine name for the English government?

"One thing more *de me ipso*, and I have done: in the spring I expect an increase of family, with more fear than hope, after a loss which has gone very deep. God bless you!

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 35.)

"My dear Friend, "Norwich, March 21, 1804.

"What a while I have had your letter in my upper drawer, wide open, that it might every day put me in mind I had it to answer! but every day I had some secret excuse for still leaving it the uppermost paper, and shutting the drawer without taking it out for a reply; I did however give the address of Mr. Wilkinson at the 'Iris' office. Mr. May wrote something about having orders to discharge your subscription for the 'Iris'; but I had told them at the office here that yours was to be considered as a presentation copy, with which they complimented *me*: I hope they did not omit to write accordingly to their London agent. I wish that you would now and then give us a column of prose or verse; that would to us be a far more agreeable and service-

able subscription than any other. You see I am come to my second childhood: Cinderella, Bluebeard, these are the tales it amuses me to tell; and I have literally bought Mother Bunch and Mother Goose, to seek if the Yellow Dwarf or the Sleeping Beauty will admit of being rounded into a good story. Of the former the single incidents are picturesque, but they cannot be squeezed into rapid succession: of the latter I have more hopes; the difficulty is to find a motive for her falling asleep, which would make the very fact of awaking into a catastrophe. You see I am faithful to my doctrine, that a prudent poet will not try to make his hero famous, but to take him so.

"Poor Burnett! Rickman writes me word he is turned opium-drinker, and is miserably hypochondriacal when he has not his drug. I suppose he has left Ipswich in order to go to Poland, and has since given up going. It is as you said,—the new plan would only serve to disappoint the old one.

"I want to hear if you are angry,—if the reviewal of 'Thalaba' displeases you, or if you can bear that sort of amicable dissection, which may be compared to drawing teeth gratis. Dr. Sayers and Pitchford, and two or three of our friends, tell me you will be satisfied. If you had been near me, you should have had the correcting of

the manuscript. You surprise me when you say five hundred 'Thalabas' have sold. I printed but three hundred 'Ellenores' from Bürger, and never could sell one hundred. I printed two hundred and fifty 'Iphigenias in Tauris,' gave away about fifty, and have nearly half a hundred still at Johnson's; and as you print on the plan of vellum paper and dear volumes, which is a great impediment to popularity, you ought to be flattered by a smaller sale than if your appeal was to readers at large. People think twice about fourteen shillings, and wait till it comes to the library or the book-club; a cheap poem is bought during the greediness of novelty-hunger.

"You say you have Malthus's book in hand: for whom? Arthur Aikin sent it to me, and Hamilton sent it to me; and puzzled enough I was to avoid repetition, or rather sameness, for repetition of opinion I have introduced. I told Hamilton I thought you had reviewed the pamphlet, and recommended to him to send you the volume, and left it three months untouched, that he should arrange it with you.

"I wish you may print your pamphlet about Methodism. Nothing would do more good in the theological world than a sham controversy between rational laymen (about the questions of the Overtons and Co.), who would play into one another's hands and into those of rational reli-

gion. I think you would do well to print one volume of your 'History of Portugal' rather than your 'Madoc': it must be that your History would obtain a general and unqualified approbation, and then your second volume would sell for a thousand pounds to the bookseller. 'Madoc' can take no harm by keeping; there is a pleasure, an extasy, in poetical composition, which becomes associated with the words and phrases it dictated. While the recollection of this rapture is fresh, the words and phrases in question wind us poets up to extasy, although they have no such power over other persons: hence the absolute necessity of keeping all poetry long enough to forget the orgasm of production, if one would judge of it sanely, that is impartially.

"I suppose by this time you are summoning the wizards and witches, and geniuses and fairies to attend the birth or christening of your new heir, and to endow with their ominous wishes the little denizen of humanity. I think I will wish you a son, for you will educate him wisely; and the virtues of a man, when they are of the higher order, tell more than those of a woman, who, if she marries an every-day personage, is what she is in vain.

"You perhaps recollect Charles Marsh, for we three dined somewhere together the first time you and I met in London: he is going to the

East Indies after Mackintosh, on an appointment of £1000 a year.

" Yours,

" WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 35.)

" My dear Friend, " Keswick, March 22, 1804.

" An unfinished eclogue upon an alderman's funeral, which I have been transcribing and designing to finish for the ' Iris,' has lain for some weeks, waiting till I should be in the humour of concluding it; but I will wait no longer for the opportunity of sending a shorter letter upon a larger sheet. I am going to London this spring, about the middle or end of April: Rickman tells me you also are bound for the same port. Now when do you set sail? for I will endeavour to make my journey suit yours, that we may meet. A great domestic event will take place in my family next month,—how soon God knows,—and I can set out as soon or as long after as is convenient, though the sooner the better.

" Do not think me incurious when you hear that I have not read the Critical Review: twice was it sent for, and twice by blundering did they disappoint me, and now there is no opportunity of receiving it,—so patience, perforce, till April. Curious I am to see it; not that it will contain

any opinion which you have not heretofore expressed in letters, but because from two or three quarters persons have spoken of the criticism itself as I always wish to hear your writings spoken of. I wrote to you once respecting your style,—somewhat petulantly perhaps,—which you perceived and forgave, because you understood it; but I had been vexed at that time into an argument to defend it, and wrote in attack while the heat was on me; coolly now and considerately let me say, that you should lower your language to the level of common comprehension. A little mannerism, a little oddity, is not merely allowable, but it is useful; these things individualize composition,—they are to written, what the eye and the tone of the voice are to oral speech; but you too often (like your admirable old townsman Sir Thomas Browne) go to your Greek and Latin for words when plain English might serve as well. 'I know William Taylor's articles,' says Tom to me in a letter, speaking of the Annual Review, 'by jaw-breaking words which are not to be found in the dictionary, and also by extensive erudition and profound knowledge, such as belong to nobody else,'—a true extract. But, for the sake of poor Tom and of others like him, do sometimes ask yourself the question whether the word you are about to use be in the dictionary or not. Harry asked

me who wrote the Critical account of 'Thalaba,' saying, he should have thought it yours if there had been hard words enough in it. I thank you for the 'Iris' and will pay you in kind.

"Longman has sent me the first Annual, which till now I have had no opportunity to examine. My own articles would be decent for what they are, if they were decently printed; Mrs. B——'s are below her usual tide-mark; and the review of poor Lamb's poor tragedy is very unjust and very impertinent: the tragedy is a very bad tragedy, full of very fine passages, and her account is all presbyterian sneer from one end to the other: remember I have been church-bred, and that presbyterian is a simple adjective of orthodox import, brimfull of meaning. The anonymous articles are good for little. Sole prop and pillar *you*! In the second volume I shall perhaps be the other king of Brentford, but in this you are acknowledged sovereign; and in plain honest truth, more sound sense brought together in more rememberable language upon statistic subjects I have never seen, nor do I believe that it is elsewhere to be found. Now and then I wished what lay before me had been manuscript, that I might have protested against an alien word.

"Harry will be here in the summer, and nothing would give me so much pleasure as that

you should be here too. Coleridge is going for Malta; he leaves London tomorrow to embark at Portsmouth, in sad and most anomalous health,—perfectly well when under no paroxysm, and yet never secure from one hour to another. It is unfortunate that you have never met; there is no man whom he so much desires to see as you.

"You may have seen 'Madoc' advertised as in the press, which is a publisher's licence,—the use of the present for the future tense; in fact it is but half corrected, but I have promised it to the printer by Midsummer-day; and if no illness or mischief interrupt me, my promises are like the laws of the Medes and Persians. Your objections to the story, as being connected with a particular system, are done away; yet I have doubts and misgivings about the poem which I never felt for 'Thalaba,' and am convinced that it is no advantage to work upon an old plan, and be years in re-casting and correcting it. The old leaven will remain: what at first was deemed a beauty is weeded out, but it is not so easy to detect the faults of what only passed originally for tolerable, and after all there will be a patch-work of style; in fact I am more encouraged by the effect it produces upon others than by my own consciousness, and should therefore be disposed to condemn it, were not Coleridge decided and loud in its praise."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 36.)

"My dear Friend, "Norwich, March 27, 1804.

"Yours of the 22nd March is before me. I hope I am profiting by what you say and have said of style and so forth. I am less displeased than you at Mrs. B——'s critique of 'John Woodvyll'; the best passages are actually reprinted: the sneer is not dissembled but avowed. The tragedy is really bad: had it been my lot to notice it, I should have supposed it a play bespoken by Ireland of some needy author in order to make it into Shakspeare manuscript. It is however preposterous to inveigh against the Southey school of writers in analysing this play; for it is not of the school struck at. It is quaint and affected, not simple and insipid; the diction is artfully antique, not vulgarly natural.

"Why did you not tell me what you thought of Bluebeard in the 'Iris'? a little detailed abuse would have helped me to mend the second edition. I have a good opinion of printing waste-paper copies in a cheap form to bring out criticism, and then licking the whelped bears into courtliness at one's leisure. You might have sold a thousand 'Thalabas' in a single volume on common paper closely printed; and you might next have executed, as in the case of 'Joan of Arc,' a corrected and expurgated copy for a

lay-by edition. Wieland always attempts first to be popular, then to be polished: the appetite for novelty clears off a waste-paper edition: he then corrects, omits and transposes, so as to balk the reviewers, and makes his old readers assist in clearing off a costly, splendid edition. I have no doubt that German experience has found out this to be the most profitable process both to author and bookseller, and it is certainly most conducive to eventual perfection of work. I shall be glad to see 'Madoc' in any form: it is instructive to artists to track the whole process of genius, to see its effusions, firstly in their native superfluity, and lastly in their pruned precision. Poems should be finished, as to substance, at a heat; else the temper of mind, the cohesion and consistency of sentiment, suffer a variation; but to keep, or at least to revise the whole, after the glow of composition is chilled and forgotten, must be also expedient. Yet if the gold of fame was never wanted on discount, how little of it would be minted into currency!

"Turner's 'Welsh Remains' I reviewed in the Annual with a persuasion of their authenticity: Hamilton also sent them, with a prayer that I would preserve so much consistency with the declarations of a now absent reviewer as to call them forgeries. I have been trying to pick holes, and am become a convert to scepticism: I shall

blow hot and cold. Do not let this creep into Turner's reply; for he will probably add an appendix, and call the book and refutation a second edition. I am glad you stick to the metromania of Sayers, and disdain measuring lines like linen by a yardel. I have recommended in the new Annual Edmund Ironside for the hero of an epopœa, with Gothic and Christian mythology, like the chorusses to my 'Reliques of Rowley,' hight 'Wortigerne': will you bite at the hook?

"There is a prospect of our chancery-suit being compromised, in which case I shall not meet you in London. Wishing to Mrs. Southey a lying-in like Rezia's in the 'Oberon,' I remain, faithfully

"Yours,

"William Taylor, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 36.)

"Keswick, April 8, 1804.

"I had allotted this evening to dissect old 'Barbablao,' and am sorry the second edition should have arrived before the first was so noticed; but I had no suspicion that you designed to reprint it in the 'Iris.'* What you say of cheap editions is still more applicable to newspaper publication: for short poems it is the best possible vehicle, and those which stand the test

* This poem may be found in the Monthly Magazine, vol. 38.

may then safely be transferred to more permanent paper.

"Lines 7 and 8 in the old copy are well omitted, but I miss the following couplet, which pleased my ear and tallied well with the story as you have represented it. For the future, number the lines of such poems for the benefit of us critics. The '*You know he was brother*,' &c., comes clumsily in, like the '*You knows*' in the openings of our old plays, which always are addressed to the audience, and mean 'You do not know.' His will was '*withstood*,'—is that word accurately used? surely 'withstand' and 'disobey' are not synonyms. The one line of Sister Anne which follows is not pleasantly—in fact, not well expressed, and methinks you have made Sister Anne too cool at the discovery; the blood upon the key should alarm her suddenly. The couplet rhyming 'tomb' and 'doom' is in its close cramped and crowded,—the tongue trips against it. '*The key my loose, powerless fingers forsook*,'—a lame and expletive way of saying 'I dropt the key.' Now come two words coupled, either of which in that place I should have feared to use,—*shy stare*; and both together, I believe, will strike every reader as very uncouth and disagreeable. '*On a peg of black wood*,'—needless, for *hung up* is enough, and more than merely expletive, by presenting an image too definite

and too trivial. The next lines are very good had they been related by the poet, but altogether undramatic. The word *clung* I do not understand, and the exquisite *touch* is too technical a phrase; nor could Mrs. Bluebeard be so little terrified as to recognise any likeness to the statue. Of the head's speech I object to nothing but the way in which she expresses her decollation, which is too roundabout. The two first lines of Anne's next speech are very clumsy, indeed the whole paragraph appears to me incorrigible. The brother's speech is quite too poetical for the occasion. I now come to some smooth sailing, *build remission* being the next objectionable phrase. Then they *applaud* the sound of the horn, when they ought to have dreaded it and to have turned pale. And prattling '*prolongs every gift of the fire*,'—I can affix no meaning to this. *All*,—too plainly for the rhyme. Bluebeard is also too loquacious and too poetical in sudden passion: '*My decision has never been sympathy's fool*,'—this I do not like; it means he is not misled by *com*passion, when *passion* is what the sentence requires. '*Framed to confine the couch*,' —awkward; and that vile word *spar*, which is damned by the slang of pugilists. Say *And* Sinai instead of *Even*; for it more rapidly combines the thought, and more flowingly fills the sentence. You have given too much attachment

to the horse,—it is impossible; you have raised him to the rank which the dog holds, and I suspect there are many degrees of transmigration before the soul ascends from one to the other. *Parry* is too fencing a phrase, *scrape* too slow a one; nor do I recollect any precedent for making them stamp like sheep to threaten,—for setting two knights swearing. '*His armour big gushes*,' &c.,—another line of lame expression. And now, having culled the weeds, I come to the story. You have hurt it by lessening the atrocity of Bluebeard, who seems, bating his dealings with the devil, to have been as good as knight need be. There is too a most incongruous mixture of the modern and the legendary. Sister Anne we must have, but why Eliza? so modern a name as not to be fifty years old in English: and in her dress, language, &c.; also the looking-glasses are all modern. This surprises me in you, who struck the right key with so unerring a hand in 'Ellenore.'

"In fine you will see, that in spite of all the fine lines, which are not particularized, and in spite of the general power which pervades it, the poem does not please me. In all legendary tales I require the absence of all ideas and phraseology, which are manifestly modern, and force upon me the anachronism; in all dramatic writing or dialogue I require brevity and the breaks of passion,

and the plainness; in all narration rapidity, and that it be so perspicuous as to be instantaneously understood. If I had given you the more recondite and metaphysical feelings which make me object to the passages here noticed as faulty, you would form some judgement of the care with which I reject in writing; for it is a bad symptom that I am now as solicitous to avoid faults as I once was to produce beauties. But again of Bluebeard: I believe a shorter line is better for narration, and wish you had modelled the story upon the old metrical romances, for which I have a true veneration. 'Cinderella' is far better: I looked for faults, and found none worthy of notice.

"My eclogue still sticks unfinished. I will send you a rhymed story which was in the Morning Post six months ago, but has, since that copy was sent them, received more alterations than I find in the two Bluebeards: it shall come this week, and I will thank you to use the scalping-knife as unmercifully as the example is here set.

"And now to your two last letters. To what you say of Harry I have deeply to express a sense of obligation, which is not easily expressed: I shall soon see John May, and will consult with him on the subject.

"My last crossed yours on the road. I re-

viewed Malthus for A. Aikin, and he has blundered strangely in sending it to you; for it was settled that I should review it, in consequence of a conversation at Longman's table with him. However I hope your article may win the place, as I shall be very glad to build upon the timbers of mine with Rickman's aid, who has for Malthus's book the same contempt and indignation that I feel. I am sorry you have pleaded for Pinkerton against Turner, for Turner is certainly in the right, and Pinkerton's assertions were merely for the sake of contradiction. He is very often a pretender in literature; his pretensions to Spanish knowledge are perfectly impudent. I catch him sometimes in the Critical telling downright lies. You will do mischief by rendering the Welsh poems suspected. I have more to say, but time presses, and you shall have the rest in a few days with 'King Ramiro.'

"God bless you!

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 37.)

"Keswick, April 11, 1804.

[This letter commences with the poem referred to in the last.]

"You will see that the story is not of my making, nor indeed have I mended it, but merely

tried tricks upon metre in relating it as I found it. It was believed five hundred years ago, and I give it you from the 'Nobiliario' of the Conde D. Pedro, son of King Diniz, and from a 'Livro das Linhagens,' perhaps the oldest book in the Portuguese language. I have two or three other poems upon such subjects as have struck me, and may perhaps, in the process of writing my history, make up a little volume of them. Have you seen the 'Devil and Bishop Athendio'? if not I will send it. You speak of 'Edmund Ironside' in your letter: I wish much to write an English epic could I find a subject, but, after beating over all the ground, can start no game. By what you say (the Review I have not seen) I infer that you would dignify the story by making it the triumph of Christianity over the religion of the Edda: I will examine Turner and think about it. But my opinion is decidedly against all machinery in such poems: if anything known to be historically true occurs, it stamps the machinery for falsehood and makes you feel the falsehood. My dreams of future work are in this order: when 'Madoc' is off my hands, to finish the 'Curse of Kehama,' of which two books and a half are done; then to write a Persian romance, built on the Zendavesta; then a Runic one, and perhaps one upon what Pinkerton calls Schamanism; and lastly, if I can

find no better English hero, none to make the personage of an heroic poem, to write a romance in honour of Robin Hood. All this is much; yet if I have ten years of life, and such comfort as I have hitherto had, I trust I shall accomplish this, and yet work hard for money meantime, and finish a History of more labour than any Englishman before me has ever yet thought due to history. But I will never again write in blank verse, or in any regular rhymes: hexameters are far better, and Sayers's metre best of all: its varieties keep the poet awake as well as the reader. I can improve 'Thallaba' (you shall have the two *ll*s), but I shall never exceed it.

"It disappoints me that you do not go to London; I had reckoned upon it as the pleasantest circumstance of expectation. Rickman too will be disappointed. This mention of a really great man, who thinks and speaks of you as he ought, reminds me of that booby Godwin, who told Coleridge, to his great amusement, that there was nothing at all in William Taylor: I remembered this in reviewing his Chaucer*.

"I have done with Hamilton: he ceased to

* William Taylor had offended Godwin, who, visiting Norwich soon after his second marriage, said to him when they met, "Well, Mr. Taylor, I find you still unmarried;" to which he received the pointed reply, "Yes, sir, *I* practise what I preach."

send me books just as I should have dropt him, as having better pay from Longman. I shall close my account this journey, but tell him, with a sort of civility due to the Review wherein I served my apprenticeship, that I will at any time review for him anything Spanish or Portuguese to make a show in his appendix. Why do you not make up an article for the 'Iris' from Thelwall's pamphlet against the Scotch reviewers? He has done it very badly, and yet with great effect; but if the real merits of the case were separated from the dross mixed with them, it would do good by doing them a mischief: an able man might now crush them, they have laid themselves open by so many absurdities. Poor Turner is sadly hurt by them: he feels those things, and they dishearten him, which is an evil; for he is really a valuable man, and one from whom much is to be expected: I respect him as the man of all others who has made the best use of his talent.

"God bless you!

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 38.)

"Dear Friend, "London, May, 1804.

"Yesterday for the first time I read your reviewal of 'Thalaba.' Your language is as undis-

guisable as my face: you must never write libels, nor I engage in conspiracy. Be sure that I am very thankful for so much praise, and more pleased with the sweet draught because it is given in a goblet of such workmanship. I saw it rapidly, and cannot therefore re-criticise till it lies before me: there are however some things to be defended. I ought to have explained my design,—that of exhibiting the various mythologies of the world in a set of poems founded upon the characteristics of each. Fatalism is the corner-stone of Mahometry, the hero of the Islam was to act therefore under the impulse of Destiny; yet the Destiny guides him,—he still acts for himself, and the power of arbitrement is surely exercised by Thalaba and felt by the reader with Mohareb (Book 5.) and with Laila. I shall correct the poem, 'root and branch,' if there be a call for a second edition; if not, I am too poor a man to afford time for cultivating flowers, however beautiful and however to me delightful: the florist must work in the cabbage-garden. Oh, William Taylor, how do these things of criticism depend upon private feeling! compare the review of this one poem in the Critical and the British Critic! Take care of 'Madoc' for me; it will stand the test.

"I left a little girl in bed with her mother; on my return I shall begin to love her, but with

the wary wisdom of *second* love, for now I may tell you that the first loss almost broke my heart.

"It is a sore disappointment to me that you do not visit London while I am here: if I were not bound to carry home a lady from Staffordshire, I would elbow out of my way to Norwich. Can I do anything for you here? my stay will be about ten days longer. I am like a fish out of water, and shall not feel comfortable till I find myself once more at home. The frank and my hurry must excuse blank paper. God bless you!

"Yours very affectionately,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 37.)

"Norwich, May 20, 1804.

"My dear Robert Southey,

"I have three of your letters to answer, but I trust we are got to writing when we have a mind, and not to minding when we get to write. The first is a critique on 'Bluebeard': to almost all the local criticism I accede. *Shy stare*, however, is quite as it should be. To *shy* is to avoid, and from the same root as to eschew: a *shy* horse is one which withdraws from objects,—to gaze and with reluctance do well together. *Clung* is as it should be; in consequence of death the muscles

lose elasticity and volume, and the skin *clings* closer about them. A peach is said to be *clung* when the internal moisture has evaporated, and the peel contracts about it with minute corrugations. The features of the dead are said to be clung when they sharpen and lose their roundness of contour: the phrase is idiomatic, and borrowed from a nurse. The stamping and swearing, *though unprecedented*, is assuredly in human nature. As to the name Eliza, the mirror of glass, and a certain air of modernness in the feminine nature, these are questions of costume, and we disagree only about the probable date of the incident. The story of Bluebeard was invented by the Catholics as a satire on Henry VIII. Demonology was still credible under James I. I see no objection to dating the incident under bloody Mary. If the murder of half a dozen wives had been ascribed to Bluebeard, he would have been a mere madman, beyond the limits of the artist's imitation, not a human being, and certainly not the centre of interest. If the story in the dark chamber had been pure tragedy, unspoiled by hanging up the head to talk like the barber's block in the pantomime, the first wife would have been more interesting than the second, contrary to the law of climax. So much by way of apology rather than defence. The disposition of the fable is good; the manner of

narration is imitated from Wieland's 'King of the Black Isles,' which I had just been reading.

"I see that Arthur Aikin has made room for your 'Malthus' and suppressed mine. This is so far good, as my article too much resembled that which I had given in the Critical for January, and as he had promised you to give vent to your animadversions. I do not however like your article. A clergyman who is heterodox, a Cantab who is a Foxite, a constitutionalist who treats Godwin with urbanity, was entitled to a politer hostility. I think I have shaken the two main pillars of his system more effectually than you, and without that absence of reverence for the author-character, the forgetting of which by writers is the chief cause of its not being duly honoured by the rest of the world. I thank you for 'Ramiro,' but not for abusing Godwin. It is the one thing I told Mackintosh I could not forgive in him—to forget that Godwin has rendered critical services to the enthusiasts of the good cause by his strictures on Eyre's charge. Godwin is sincere, independent, and disinterested, more than most men. What signifies it what he thinks of me? He will endeavour to think of me justly for his own sake. Ought it to vex me that there are men in whose opinion I am likely to rise?

"It disappoints me that I am not to come to

London. I should like to spend a week with you and Rickman. But the chancery suit, which was to have been the pretence, and which has deferred the enterprise of a journey, is assuming another form, and will not want me now. I am glad you are not sore about the critique of 'Thalaba'; I thought the poem could be helped more by making certain allowances to the slanderers than by mere puff. I return you 'Ronsard,' that it may be put in its place. I enjoyed your anti-methodistical declamation and your poetical critiques, especially—no, not especially—Bailey, whom I was too ignorant to detect. (See Critical.) In consequence of what passed at your house when I last saw you in London, I addressed some eight or ten or more months ago to your friend Heber, at Leigh and Sotheby's, a scarce book, 'Astley's Variety of Things.' I should like to know that it got safe to hand, and rather through you than from him.

"Yours,

"William Taylor, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 39.)

"Keswick, July 1, 1804.

"It is time to tell you how, after having talked and walked and travelled away the little flesh which can be spared from my bones, quiet and plenty of sleep have restored it; how my little

Edith is a large and thriving child of two months old, and how happily I have relapsed into all those habits and occupations which were so completely dislocated by a journey to London. At Newington I met Dr. Smith, and was pleased to find that his sister remembered me as well as I remembered her. I had also the good fortune to meet Mr. Henley ; and, as of course, I mentioned your name to him, and he spoke of you in a way which it did me good to hear : this puts me upon making my defence about Godwin. I do not call him "a dim-eyed son of blasphemy," as Coleridge did in his days of intolerant Unitarianism,—he may blaspheme and wear spectacles in peace for me ; but when such a man says, "Take my word for it, there is nothing at all in William Taylor," I certainly do take his word for it that he believes what he says, and is a blockhead for his pains ; and the private anger that such a circumstance excited, added to that produced by his weathercock instability of opinion, and the odium which it brought upon the best principles and the best cause, and the want of all feeling in stripping his dead wife naked, as he did, and such a wife, and taking such another home, when the picture of *that first* hung up over his fireplace,—indeed, indeed, my flesh is not made of such Quaker-fibre, nor my blood of such toad-temperature, as not to be irritated by these recol-

lections. You know how much I hope for the human race, but you do not know how deeply that hope is rooted, and how it leavens all my feelings and opinions. To see, then, two such men as Godwin and Malthus come to such an issue upon such a question, did make me feel bitter anger and bitter contempt; and notwithstanding even your dissatisfaction, I cannot wish one syllable that expresses or enhances such sentiments were cancelled. The reviewal is imperfect, very imperfect: such things never lie by me for correction, and I have here no one to help me by immediate criticism. It might have shown that his detail is full of blunders, and that his ultimate plans would inevitably provoke, and ought to provoke, rebellion and revolution.

"It was a sore disappointment that you did not come to London. We should have had some pleasant hours at Rickman's, who would every hour have continued to rise in your estimation, and he would have brought together a few men whom you would have liked to know. You are doing good in the Annual Review, that is certain; one article supports another, and your opinions come together as much in a body as is possible in such a shape. Henley said you were the best statistic in Europe, not even excepting some German, whose name I could not shape to my eye when I heard it, and it has escaped my auri-

cular memory. I can only say, that you have taught me so thoroughly the extent of my own ignorance that I shall not venture to praise. In the poetical department and *belles lettres* (oh, give me *English* for that phrase!) it is to be wished that you were my coadjutor instead of * * * and those other *curmudgeons* (according to Dr. Ash's excellent interpretation of the word in his Dictionary, *which see*, if you do not know the jest already). One reviewal directly contradicts the radical system of the other; it is pull devil, pull baker, all through.

"Harry has not yet made his appearance; his walk must have extended further than I thought it would have carried him. I wish he were come. The expectation forces upon me a remembrance how many years have passed since we lived under the same roof, and with that thought comes a long train of melancholy associations. God send me independent leisure enough to leave behind me my domestic history! It would be a picture of society in a new light, wherein it has never before been presented. Harry will have a pleasant summer here and a profitable one. A few friends will drop in in the course of the season, to whom I wish him introduced; and my overflowing of Portuguese information will supply him with a stock of new knowledge for Edinburgh.

"I am passionately and exclusively engaged in history, nor shall I be able to extricate myself till the sight of the first proof from Ballantyne reminds me that I have half 'Madoc' to re-write. Do not accuse me of presumption in again running races: *this* is all mature for parturition; and without imposing upon myself such a necessity, I should still have lingered in Portugal and in Portuguese Asia, perhaps till I had passed the age of writing poetry. I have written now more than the amount of three honest quartos, and there are yet years of labour before me. You ask, who will read? I have this ground of hope, that the books will be read for the amusement they contain, and that I shall by other means have made such a reputation, that it shall one day be thought a thing of course to have read them. The objection of bulk will be obviated by dividing it into many separate works, a division made necessary by the divided subjects and exampled by the Portuguese themselves.

"Davy will soon be here on his way towards Scotland. He is, I hope, recovering from the baneful effects of fashionable company, and of fame too early acquired. There is a notion of getting Coleridge to deliver lectures on poetry at the Royal Institution next year; and Davy has asked me if I would do it, as he will not be returned from Malta. I have no inclination for

the task, and am glad that the exceeding inconvenience of the journey is sufficient to outweigh the only motive that could induce me to think such a thing possible,—the wish of pre-occupying a situation in which the old mumpsimus faith will else be delivered *ex cathedrâ*. My lecturing-days are over; and to preach in a London lecture-room upon poetry! and talk of all that is connected with the highest part of our nature to ladies and gentlemen, would be a profanation like making the Eleusinian mysteries act a puppet-show at Athens.

"Owen is translating the 'Mabinogion.' I have seen these tales; they are even more curious than I expected,—as barbarous as possible, and what is most extraordinary, strikingly like the 'Arabian Nights' in the character of fiction. Princes subsisting by making shoes and saddles better than anyone else could do; a mouse who is the magician's wife, &c. &c. The translation is to the very letter just as it should be,—Welsh idiom and Welsh syntax; nothing so curious has yet appeared: how old the composition is I cannot tell, but the traditions themselves seem to me certainly older than the conversion of Britain, and I am no credulous believer in antiquity.

"What proofs have you that Bluebeard is Henry VIII.? I ask anxiously, because it is so apparently true; and I am collecting what re-

lates to the conduct of the Catholics at that period, which will make a very curious chapter in my history. I shall soon send you more rhymes for the 'Iris,' and a monodrama, which to my feeling has something good in it. If you think them worth criticising, tell me how to mend them. God bless you!

"Yours affectionately,

"Robert Southey."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 38.)

"My dear Friend, "Norwich, July 6, 1804.

"I am glad your new favourite thrives and does well; I never could join with Orestes and thank the gods that they decree to root me childless from the face of the earth: Mr. Malthus even has not wholly reconciled me to being the last of my race,—the Atropos of a pedigree which reaches back to Adam.

"It was in conversation at Mr. Crowe's table that I heard it observed of 'Bluebeard,' that the story originated in a satire on Henry VIII., and the manuscripts of Lady Herbert of Cherbury, in the British Museum, were adduced as vouchers for the Englishness of several fairy-tales supposed to be French.

"If your lectures are to be ready by next year, you will do well to borrow largely from Sulzer's

Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste; it is the best book of criticism respecting literary and fine art which yet exists. In the short account of the poet Ramler (which occurs in the Monthly Magazine, ix. 463) he is called professor of *fine literature*, on purpose to get rid of the detestable gallicism, *belles lettres*. If you never read that account of Ramler, I recommend it to you, *meo periculo*, on account of the 'Ode to Kings,' with which it concludes. I told the *curmudgeon* story myself in print, in the desultory 'Comments on Mason's Supplement to Johnson' (Monthly Magazine, xi. 291), and was amused by your friend Heber's repeating it afterwards to me: it is a story that can be written, but cannot be told with effect.

"I cannot agree with you that Dryden is only at the head of our *second*-rate writers; he appears to me, both in prose and verse, a master of his art. Translate anything he says into any language, it is still excellent,—the thought or matter being always valuable. He has more ease than any other negligent writer who ever composed, for ease usually results from polishing away roughnesses. His powers of expression are boundless; he always rises with his subject, and can attain a vividness of imagery, or a condensation of eloquence, which panting Pope toils after in vain: our best narratives are Dryden's

fables. I wrote to Henry from Diss about the end of April last; I suppose my letter did not reach Edinburgh before he left it, as I have not heard from him since. While with you I trust he will give a little time regularly to Greek; he began to be in danger of forgetting it while at Norwich; and of the bunch of keys called languages, it is the most important opener of the hoards of taste: besides, it is, like freemasonry, a sort of passport into the circles of the lettered everywhere,—it is the die in which science coins her jargon, and to a working author the blue ribband which is to lead his pamphlets into gentlemen's company.

"'T is well that Owen is translating the 'Mabinogion.' What says Sharon Turner to my article in the Critical for May? It endeavours, as Hamilton requested, to support the opinion of a former reviewer of Turner whose name is unknown to me, and who said the Welsh poems were forged. I converted myself to the belief that they are forgeries by trying to find arguments for their counterfeiture. There is another article in the same review (p. 110) which contains these words:—'The epic poet should imagine himself an ox or an ass, and describe the most natural and trivial events with the wonder of ignorance, with the astonishment and admiration of stimulated stupidity. The inferior animals no doubt

ascribe to magic and miraculous intervention those results of human conduct which succeed to causes in their judgement inadequate; and it is from such a point of view that the epic poet should contemplate all human action. Write about your hero as his dog or his horse would do, and you will make a good epopea: what you describe as marvellous will then be probable.' For your monodrama I am impatient, both on my own account and for the 'Iris.' I have been trying to translate Wieland's 'King of the Black Isles,' but have stuck fast in displeasure. At Ritson's 'Sir Iwain' I intend looking, to see if it can be cut down to a tale, by making the whole story terminate on Arthur's arrival.

"Yours,

"WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 40.)

"Keswick, July, 1804.

"I cannot assent to your epic creed. Instead of oxifying or assifying myself, and crying 'wonderful!' at every action of my perfect prince, I take my stand beside him, and point out all his actions to the wonder and comprehension of the beholders, as Dr. Smith exhibits a plant to his auditors,—not the less admiring the subject because he understands it, but rather admiring and

praising it with a deeper feeling. The Critical never falls in my way: it would have been but civil in Hamilton to have sent it me as an old contributor, and one who offered at all times to assist him when he needed a Spanish scholar. If 'Amadis' be not reviewed there already, I would ask you to take care of it; because the book, having been helped on by Walter Scott in the Edinburgh and Annual, is selling well, and every breath of wind would be useful; and also because Scott insists that the story is originally French, which I do not think you will do after examining the evidence adduced in the preface.

"How can you have read Sharon Turner's 'Vindication,' without learning that Pinkerton is the man whom you have defended; or his 'History,' without seeing that the Anglo-Saxon literature, manners, &c. are to form the subject of an additional volume?

"Henry has made his appearance: his manners are pleasant, and his mind as well stored as it well can be at his age. He seems to have chosen his society well in Scotland, and having been accustomed to better, is able to appreciate it fairly. I wish you could mountaineer it with us for a few weeks, and I would press the point if Coleridge also were here: but even without him we could make your time pass pleasantly; and here is Wordsworth to be seen, one of the wildest

of all wild beasts, who is very desirous of seeing you.

"'Sir Ywaine' will easily be made to fit a modern dress. I wish you could see certain versions of Chaucer which Wordsworth has executed, solely with a view of making them easily intelligible, and using no words that appear more modern than Chaucer's own age: he has succeeded admirably. If you are disposed to work upon old materials, that work of Ritson's will supply you with several subjects; so perhaps would 'Sir Tristram,' if the exceeding brevity of its style be not an objection, and its uncouth language too great a difficulty. If I ever write an English epic, it will probably be some Round Table story. Shape me anything like a groundwork out of 'King Arthur,' and *eris mihi magnus Apollo*. But I do not like you to be employed upon translations: were it not shame if the King of Spain should mint old plate when he has the mines of Potosi at command? Your remarks upon the capture of Surinam ought to be transplanted, if possible, into the Annual, which bids fair to become my political bible.

"Surely Dryden is not in the first class: Shakespere, Milton, Spenser,—these form the poetical trinity of England, and these are at an unapproachable distance from all their successors. With reference to these poets, I place Dryden

at the head of the second-rates. I admire, but do not love him; he can mend a versifier, but could never form a poet. His moral imbecility kept him down: with powers for painting, he chose to be a limner by trade; instead of amending ages to come, he was the pimp and pander of his own.

"Farewell! I will employ Harry to transcribe a long ballad for the 'Iris.'

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

William Taylor to Robert Southey. (No. 39.)

"My dear Friend, "Norwich, October 17, 1804.

"Am I in fault, or you, that we have so long not corresponded? You told me in your last that you were employing Henry to transcribe a long ballad for the 'Iris'; I kept deferring to write to either of you in expectation of this promised communication to criticize, and having nothing pleasant in worldly matters to announce, I supplied my laziness with satisfactory excuses for procrastination.——It grieves me much that it should become unadvisable for Henry to settle here; however, he was probably not bent on doing so, and will as readily try his luck elsewhere. I am curious to know if you found him more capable of a persevering application to Spanish than I found him to German: did he

learn enough to read 'Don Quixote,' or leave off, the thing unaccomplished? It seems to be his nature to set off with ardour, and to turn back short of the half-way-house. A very worthy young man, Mr. Robert Gooch of Yarmouth, whom Henry well knew there, is going this winter to Edinburgh to study medicine: I rejoice in this circumstance on Henry's account; their former intimacy will naturally revive, and Henry will find before long that the measured steps of his rival are very likely to outmarch his own running. If anything can stimulate Henry to the full use of his capacities, it is emulation.

"I reviewed the 'Amadis' you recommend to me in the Critical for last January. When am I to dissect 'Madoc'? I suppose, from what Henry says, you are quitting the lakes *for good and all*, as we say in Norfolk, and coming up to London with a leaf-fall of manuscript.

"Your Mr. Wordsworth is no doubt the poet; not the theologian whom Gregory Blunt hurtles. Dr. Sayers is making a new edition of his 'Disquisitions'; some antiquarian matter about Edgar Atheling, St. George, Anglo-Saxon, will be added. There is a little paper on the schools of English poetry, in which he says, that under James I., Italy supplied the models; under Charles II., France; under George III., at first Greece, and now Germany. This makes four schools,—the

Italian, the French, the Grecian, and the German,—into which he distributes the poets.

" Our chancery-suit is neither pleaded nor arbitrated: perhaps I may still meet you in London.

" Yours,

" WILLIAM TAYLOR, Jun."

Robert Southey to William Taylor. (No. 41.)

" Ambleside, November 23, 1804.

" My dear Friend,

" A half-written letter, begun immediately on the receipt of your last, is lying in my desk at home (for I am now visiting Charles Lloyd at Ambleside): it is better to begin anew, than to protract a delay which has been already too long continued. Harry is gone back to Edinburgh: he has passed a cheerful summer, and if not a very profitable one in the way of study I readily excuse him, remembering what my own habits were when something younger. As you may suppose, he left behind him a very favourable impression with everybody, — with me also, though I wish him more perseverance, and enough self-denial to secure his own permanent comfort and self-complacency. Advice usually excites dislike; I therefore never offered it: he knew what I thought right, and to have told him when

I thought he was wrong would only have provoked him to a defence. Our time passed easily, and should we remain here next summer, I shall be glad when the time for his return arrives, and he will not be sorry.

"My letters, like Gibbon's sentences, all go to one tune, and would furnish as pretty specimens of egotism as the memoirs of P. P. 'T was a vile trick of Akenside to strip the personal pronoun of its honest importance, dwarfing and dotting it, as if *I* was not the most consequential word in the language. An Englishman does think himself somebody, and has good reason to think himself so:—our great *I* is in character. The news of my microcosm is not very important just at present. The best is, that the last sheet of 'Madoc' is on the table,—that is of the poem; the notes will take up another month, and then without much delay it shall be delivered into your hands. I had prefaced it with a story of its birth and progress, thereby accounting for sundry faults; but on consultation and further thought, I was convinced that nobody likes egotism in his neighbour, that the world can find out faults enough for themselves, and that the least said is the soonest mended: so my preface contains nothing more than what is necessary to state,—the historical foundation of the poem, said as briefly as possible in some twenty lines.

" I have commenced my campaign against the authors with a resolution to censure for the future as gently as possible; in fact, your remark has risen in my conscience, and I fairly confess that the pride of saying a good thing is but a bad motive for saying an ill-natured one. You perhaps have sinned on the other side; Pinkerton and Maurice are instances. It is well that the last escaped my hands: he is the worst putter together of a book of all men living, except Vallancy.

" Dr. Sayers's essay will interest me. We have however a school of poetry of our own; and of the present race of poets and poetasters, very many discover no traces of German taste. The Wordsworth who chooses to add one article more to the nine-and-thirty is brother to William Wordsworth, has lately married Lloyd's sister, and is settled on his living between Yarmouth and Norwich: I do not know him, but know that he is a good man, very studious, very sincere, thoroughly bigoted, and holding in thorough contempt all persons who differ from his own orthodox standard. William Wordsworth is very desirous of seeing you: pray, pray, come up to us, if (as we have reason to hope) we should remain here next summer. My plans are sadly unsettled by the great evils in the world. This piratical war with Spain may very probably oc-

casion our expulsion from Lisbon, and that city is also perilously near this dreadful pestilence: my uncle, who would willingly end his days there, feels himself very insecure, and thinks he may soon be driven here; else I should certainly migrate in the next winter, and remain abroad as long as Edith could be contented to forgo her own country: I must wait and see how things turn out. Meantime life is running on: I have been married nine years, and it is time that I should have a settled resting-place.

"We are very uneasy about Tom. If there was a frigate lost in the hurricane at Dominica it was the Galatea; and, besides, that ship has suffered dreadfully in attempting to cut out a sloop. No official accounts have arrived; the private letters do not mention Tom's name. What most alarms me is that he has not written himself. I fear the fever worst of all chances.

"God bless you!

"Robert Southey."

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